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Literary Bodies: Intersectional Spaces of Belonging in Caribbean-Canadian Stories by Bissoondath, Brand, and Clarke

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the role of space and place in the identity formation of the im/migrant characters of the selected short story texts by Caribbean Canadian authors Neil Bissoondath, Dionne Brand, and Austin Clarke. My analysis of identity formation pays attention to how the characters move, interact, and exist within these public and private environments. The postcolonial discourses that affect their experiences within these environments, either through outside forces or internal conflicts, are strong factors in reinscribing their positions within society. The societal pressures affecting them from the host country may range from discomfort in the public and private environments they move through, such as being the only Black person in the train, to dealing with completely inappropriate comments or advances from one's boss based on the fact that they are Other and seen as inferior.

Chapter 1 focuses on space, which, in this thesis, is analyzed through the social, civic, and public environments found within the text. This is done through an analysis of the representations of the spaces associated with the different communities and individuals that interact. I discuss how these interactions may affect one's sense of identity by paying attention to moments of cultural nostalgia, and conflict, whether internal or external, in relation to the environments, whether of the present or the past, in order to determine important spaces within Canada and the Caribbean.

Chapter 2 focuses on place, analyzed through the domestic, individual, and private environments within which the characters interact. This is done through a relational analysis of the narrative representations of differing feelings and emotions elucidated by the characters' interpretations of the more intimate places with which they interact.

Chapter 3 focuses on gender and how the social mobility of the characters is heavily biased by the margins within which they are placed by the hegemonic values of the society at

large. I look at the characters, their social positions (class), sex/gender and how these identity markers affect their position.

The thesis comes to the conclusion that there is little chance of actual integration of the im/migrant body without significant changes to the migrant's identity or sense of self. The selected texts, through my analysis, consistently demonstrate that Caribbean im/migrants are generally represented as "not integrating" on the basis of their cultural nostalgia for their place of origin.

Keywords: Identity, Space, Place, Gender, Mobility, Postcolonial Discourse, Origins, Nostalgia

Résumé de thèse

Le but de cette thèse est d'analyser le rôle de l'espace et des lieux dans la formation identitaire des personnages im/migrant(e)s au cours des nouvelles sélectionnées d'auteur(e)s caribéen(ne)s-canadien(ne)s Neil Bissoondath, Dionne Brand et Austin Clarke. Mon analyse de cette formation identitaire examine les déplacements, interactions et modes de vie des personnages à l'intérieur de ces environnements publics et privés ainsi que la manière dont les discours anti/dé/postcoloniaux affectent leurs expériences à l'intérieur de ces environnements, soit par le biais de conflits internes ou de forces externes.

Le premier chapitre se concentre sur l'espace, qui dans ce mémoire est analysé dans le contexte des environnements sociaux, civiques et publics que l'on retrouve dans le texte. Cette analyse a trait aux représentations des espaces associés avec les différentes communautés et individus qui y interagissent. Je focalise sur la manière dont ces interactions influencent leur perception identitaire, en portant une attention particulière aux moments de nostalgie culturelle, de conflits, de tensions, ce qui s'avère particulièrement utile pour déterminer les espaces cruciaux.

Le deuxième chapitre analyse l'espace en se concentrant sur les environnements domestiques, individuels et privés, à l'intérieur desquels les personnages interagissent. Cette analyse se fait par le biais de représentations narratives des différents sentiments et émotions élucidé(e)s à travers les interprétations de ces endroits plus intimes/personnels où les personnages interagissent.

Le troisième chapitre se concentre plutôt sur le genre des personnages ainsi que sur la façon dont leur mobilité sociale est affectée par les marges entre lesquelles ces personnages sont forcé(e)s d'exister, c'est-à-dire à l'intérieur des valeurs hégémoniques de la société.

J’observe directement les interactions entre les personnages et j’examine où ils sont positionnés socialement, et dans quelle mesure le genre affecte cette position.

Le point focal de cette thèse est la conclusion logique qu’il n’y a que peu de chance d’intégration réelle du corps im/migrant sans changements significatifs à son identité ou à sa notion/perception de soi. Les textes sélectionnés pour mon analyse démontrent de manière consistante que les im/migrant(e)s caribéen(ne)s sont généralement représenté.es comme étant peu ou pas intégré(e)s en partie à cause d’une nostalgie culturelle pour leur espace d’origine.

Mots clés : identité, espace, endroit/lieux, mobilité, genre, discours postcolonial, origines, nostalgie

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Introduction

> Too much has been made of origins. All origins are arbitrary. This is not to say that they are not also nurturing, but they are essentially coercive and indifferent. Country, nation, these concepts are of course deeply indebted to origins, family, tradition, home. Nation-states are configurations of origins as exclusionary power structures which have legitimacy based solely on conquest and acquisition. Here at home, in Canada, we are all implicated in this sense of origins. It is a manufactured origin nevertheless playing on our need for a home, however tyrannical. This country, in the main a country of immigrants, is always redefining origins, jockeying and smarning for degrees of belonging. Erasing aspects of complicated origins by shedding accents, shedding dress, shedding tastes, shedding tyrannies; taking on other aspects of other complicated origin no matter the new tyrannies. Entry into nation and therefore home pervades the public discourse (*A Map to the Door of No Return;* Brand 64-5).

Literary representations of space, place, and other geographic concepts can be used to critically contextualize and analyze social identities and social relations in a variety of Caribbean expatriate narratives set in Canada. Postcolonial and cultural studies approaches to space, diaspora, community, and identity enable the exploration of diverse representations of discourses and identity creation generated by the spaces and places dramatized within the selected Caribbean-Canadian short stories. The primary corpus of this thesis focuses on three short story collections: *Sans Souci* by Dionne Brand, *Digging up the Mountains* by Neil Bissoondath, and *In This City* by Austin Clarke. However, the essay/life-writing, *A Map to the Door of No Return* by Brand, will also prove useful in providing further insights into the uses and significance of space and place within the selected short stories. The three authors were chosen because they are all Caribbean expatriates who reside in Canada, and whose works, at one level or another, represent different perspectives on the migrant experience. While the authors share similarities as to their region of origin and their migration from the Caribbean to Canada, they have different backgrounds and experiences both in the Caribbean and in Canada that enrich the comparisons between their narratives. Their short story collections also share

similar themes regarding the exploration and dramatization of their migrant characters' experiences of space and place during a certain period in time. This means that the effects of the socio-political realities in the authors' countries of origin may play a significant role in the narrative uses of origins, migration, and belonging in the texts. This may be especially possible as Brand and Bissoondath both left Trinidad around the same time, potentially linked with the political upheaval that was occurring there. However, because these books are all short story collections, I have decided to minimize the possible nuances that may have been generated by the socio-political changes in the authors' country of origin in order to focus on the migration of the characters and what repercussions their movement may have had on their identity and fluctuating levels of belonging.

In analyzing my corpus of Caribbean expatriate texts I found it important to avoid subsuming or erasing the cultural specificity of their representations of minority and alternate identities, practices, and discourses (i.e. Trinidadian as opposed to Jamaican), and to make sure that the characters' identities are not presumed to simply be those of the authors. The national origins, ethnicities, gender and cultural backgrounds of the characters are not always mentioned, yet if these are not taken into account, their neglect or misrepresentation --via a questionable pan-Caribbean sense of culture and identity-- can be detrimental to the relevance of the theories and critical analyses I bring to the primary texts. However, if the authors fail to mention these details, it must be significant. It is also important to note that I do not personally share any type of background, origin, race, or cultural experience, with the authors, or with the characters. While I may potentially have encountered similar situations or emotions, I am aware that my lack of personal cultural experience is limiting in potentially understanding, analyzing, and interpreting certain aspects of how the authors portray the experiences of the characters. I have also attempted to be aware of and remove any potential discriminatory ideals due to my upbringing. This, however, may not necessarily seem the case, based on other points of view,

but I am aware of these limitations and have attempted to work on my analysis as fairly as possible.

As I noted previously, it will also be important to be aware of moments of ambivalence in the selected texts, especially in terms of race, gender, and class, as well as differing representations of space and place, all the while keeping in mind that not all short stories within the collections will provide examples to prove my theories. It is, however, possible that not all examples of space and place within the selected narratives will provide insights or fit within the theories that I use in order to explore these discourses.

Understanding how environments affect individuals is crucial to understanding how they can be changed for better or worse, depending on the power systems at play. Postcolonial theory looks at the impacts and consequences of the colonizer on the colonized, as well as how the colonized have been exploited throughout history, even though the "colonies" may no longer exist as such. Doreen Massey argues that our environments and the discourses already established there are extremely important to identity formation:

> "In one way or another, identities are 'relational'. That, for instance, we do not have our being and then go out and interact, but that to a disputed but none-the-less significant extent our beings, our identities, are constituted in and through those engagements, those practices of interaction. Identities are forged in and through relations (which include non-relations, absences and hiatuses). In consequence they are not rooted or static, but mutable ongoing productions.
>
> This is an argument which has had its precise parallel in reconceptualisation of spatial identities. An understanding of the relational nature of space has been accompanied by arguments about the relational construction of the identity of place.
>
> If space is a product of practices, trajectories, interrelations, if we make space through interactions at all levels, from the (so-called) local to the (so-called) global,

> then those spatial identities such as places, regions, nations, and the local and the global, must be forged in this relational way too, as internally complex, essentially unboundable in any absolute sense, and inevitably historically changing" (2004, 5)

Therefore, how the selected literary representations of postcolonial diasporic subjects are shown to engage with and be affected by different spaces and places generated by or associated with public and private practices and discourses are important in determining identity formation. However, these concepts are constantly in a state of flux due to continually changing and evolving discourses from the local and global community, and through the passing of time. As ongoing productions, the identities of the characters are forged within the spaces and places they move and interact. It is in these moments of interconnectedness in time and through movement, whether through a public or private lens, that we can find how the conventional spaces and places are lived and represented. Space and place directly relate to how the characters feel within their environments, dictating their place in the social hierarchy. By analyzing the possibilities for movement through space and place and how geographic concepts, through real and imagined communities, affect the migrant characters, we become convinced that an intersectional analysis is necessary. Unequal power relationships constructed in difference through race, ethnicity and even exacerbated through gender, particularly affect the identities and the potential for belonging for the migrant characters. Therefore, critically summarizing, comparing and analyzing the significant and recurrent spaces and places in the narratives, as well as how they represent identity formation, will clarify their role in contextualizing marginal migrant identities, and whether or not these interrelations allow them to belong within the Canadian environment.

My thesis analyzes the physical aspects of the selected narratives' spatial environments in conjunction with the more affective and ideological associations of place in order to determine how the characters experience, perceive and adapt to their social identities and

relations as a result of the longstanding impacts of colonialism within Canada, and more specifically, in Toronto. Nathaniel O'Grady discusses affect as:

> the set of ever-changing processes human and non-human bodies undergo as they experience, encounter, and perform life among other bodies within material space. Affect prioritizes the body as a means for making sense of the world. In other words, affect seeks to address and examine invoked states that combine what our bodies sense and perceive with our capacities for rendering life in the world intelligible. At the same time, affect emphasizes reading the body as a means for expressing the state of affairs or situation it finds itself in. The body, for theories of affect, is at once both a faculty by which we make sense of the situations we find ourselves within *and* a medium that betrays the significance of the situation in which the body performs. Playing these roles, affect emphasizes reading bodies, their states and situation as pre-personal or transpersonal (or better yet pre-species and trans-species) entities. Affects can be expressed spatially as existing across and among people and things, not within them. Affect assumes a level of openness on behalf of the body, with each body showing a capacity to affect, and a capacity to be affected by, that which they co-exist with. The reciprocal conditions in which affects proliferate also feed into the sense of temporality that affects perform. States read through affect last as long or as short as the set of relations which hold them together are present. Affect articulates life and the situations in which it is lived as a series of events which exist in process, being made and remade over time by the performances that bodies enact and get caught up in (O'Grady).

As O'Grady states, the affective associations to the spaces and places are particularly important in analyzing how the characters react to their environments as well as how they are acted upon.

Analyses of space and place are emphasized through close attention to particular representations of members of the Caribbean and Canadian cultures interacting, coming into conflict with, and being affected by, one another, as well as by other influencing factors within the stories. These environments of interaction, of conflict and influence should be particularly helpful in establishing how the internalization of spaces and places, as well as the resistance to or the rejection of them, are represented by the narratives' postcolonial, diasporic subjects. This, in turn, should allow me to contextualize and analyze how these identities within the texts are formed or affected by their associations to space and place within the postcolonial migrant framework. As stated by Andrea Davis: "Attempts to delineate a black literary tradition in Canada have largely been a contestation over space and place and articulated within equally contested discourses of citizenship and (un)belonging ... The right to belong is one that has to be earned differently" (32). It is through a critical analysis of these sites of contestation that the way spaces and places affect identity formation may be contextualized. Furthermore, it will be necessary to look at instances of how gender may also affect the uses of space and place by the characters as well as how social mobility may be impacted by these various discourses. It is important to note, however, that not all of the characters are Black, as Bissoondath's characters state that they are of South-Asian descent. This may be another factor that delineates difference in levels of belonging as Clarke and Brand both portray characters that are predominantly Black.

In order to recognize the limitations of the discursive and social ramifications of space and place, shedding light on the dialectical social character of space will be essential. Robert Beauregard succinctly paraphrases several important theorists, such as Edward Soja, Henri Lefebvre, and Louis Althusser, in order to explain the basic functioning of the social character of space. He says:

> Production relationships were not dominant "in the last instance," to use Louis Althusser's rhetorical phrase, but rather "dialectically intertwined [with] and inseparable" (p.209) from the social relations of space. The "social relations of production are both spaceforming and space-contingent" (p.211), Soja wrote, and he quoted Lefebvre in support: "Space and the political organization of space express social relationships but also react back upon them" (p.210). Once created, then, space becomes a phenomenon of causal significance. And, because both space and class relations originate in the mode of production, space is ontologically and epistemologically equivalent to, but not substitutable for, the social relations of production (470-1).

It is through the examination of these social relations, such as how the bodies of the characters interact within their environments, that I will be able to determine the literal and symbolic significances of those spaces and places affecting the relationships between the characters', their environments, their relationships with "others," as well as the subsequent discourses that are created within these private and public environments at a given time. It will also be important to examine how these significant discourses potentially reinscribe the same feelings and emotions felt by the characters in the first place or if they dictate how they should be inscribing the discourses of the different environments and how this occurs. One must consider, argues Beauregard, that the " "spatiality of human life … begins with the body, with the construction and performance of self, the human subject" (p. 6), thereby giving greater specificity to his claim that space is a material product, and elaborating on his assertion in 1980 that space is "an evolving product of human action" (Soja, 1980, p. 210)" (472). It is through these differing actions in flux that I will be able to analyze the effects, and affects of space and place on the characters.

It is extremely easy to confuse space and place; as they are intrinsically linked and cannot exist without each other as concepts. Therefore, in order to analyze space and place within my thesis, a deeper understanding of these concepts and their use is necessary before generalizing further about my approach and use of these environments. There are many variations of possible definitions for these concepts. Generally, space, as a geographical concept, is defined (here in the Oxford dictionary) as "the dimensions of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move."[1] Whereas, place, in the same sense, is described as "a portion of space available or designated for or being used by someone."[2] However, it is necessary to move beyond the dictionary definitions to analyze the movements of the migrant bodies within the spaces and places in the narratives. David Harvey, for one, states that:

> Space is, of course, one of those words that frequently elicits modification. The complications perhaps arise more out of the modifications (which all too frequently get omitted in the telling or the writing) rather than out of any inherent complexity of the notion of space itself. When, for example, we write of "material", "metaphorical", "liminal", "personal", "social" or "psychic" space (just to take a few examples) we thereby indicate a considerable diversity of contexts which so inflect matters as to seem to render the meaning of space itself entirely contingent upon the context" (1).

It is within the Caribbean-Canadian short stories from my corpus that I hope to elicit various examples of space and place in order to find a better understanding of the contexts in which migrant bodies may belong within the environment of the Canadian city.

Various critics have defined space and place in different ways, and for different purposes. It is impossible to draw clear lines between the two because of their interrelation.

[1] https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/space
[2] https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/place

Edward Casey states that: “To assess place and space in the first century of modernity is perforce to take into account scientific as well as philosophical thinking” (137). In order to properly assess the contexts of the environments, intersectionality will be extremely important. Complications may arise when attempting to separate the two concepts, especially in order to distinguish how they affect the characters. However, a certain separation is necessary in order to assess space and place through the differing concepts of the public and private environments through Chapters 1 and 2, as well as through mobility in space and place as seen in Chapter 3, which also further addresses effects of gender. According to Timothy Cresswell,

> As well as being located and having a material visual form, places must have some relationship to humans and the human capacity to produce and consume meaning … Space is a more abstract concept than place. When we speak of space we tend to think of outer-space or the spaces of geometry. Spaces have areas and volumes. Places have spaces between them … Space, then, has been in distinction to place as a realm without meaning - as a ‘fact of life’ which, like time, produces the basic coordinates for human life. When humans invest meaning in a portion of space and then become attached to it in some way (naming is one such way) it becomes a place. Although this basic dualism of space and place runs through much of human geography since the 1970s it is confused somewhere by the idea of social space - or socially produced space - which in many ways, plays the same role as place (Lefebvre 1991; Smith 1991)” (7-10).

It is through combining these various understandings of space and place that I attempt to analyze how the characters from my primary corpus are affected, as divided between my three chapters; through the public and private environments, and through movement.

In order to facilitate our understanding of these complex concepts associated with space and place through a literary and postcolonial lense, with which these texts will be analyzed, the

following is a brief introduction to some of the theorists and their approaches that have had the greatest influence on this paper. Lisa Chalykoff emphasizes how social spaces are encountered and lived everyday, including through their effects upon our experiences of, or feelings about, our own bodies. Space imbues even our personal intimate spaces with "social character" and through our interactions within "social space" we mediate our experiences, emphasizing the importance of space as place. Chalykoff also states that space is not only related to the physical but also dwells or operates within the realm of social and mental environments, through collective and individual attributions of the meaning of space as place (2). Accordingly, by analysing characters' experiences and perceptions of their physical, social and mental environments, I am able to analyze the spaces and places within the short stories that influence and determine their discourses and actions, and especially in terms of how postcolonial theory can be used to decipher additional information about them.

These dynamics also further influence how the space around them is utilized and inscribed. The creation of the social hierarchy, through the characters' level of belonging and unbelonging, affects individuals differently according to their social categorizations, such as race, gender, class, etc. Katherine McKittrick and Linda Peake state that:

> Space and place are intimately connected to race, gender, class, sexuality and other axes of power; all geographic knowledges are situated, and location matters. Situated knowledges create a conceptual and material space through which nondominant geographies can be articulated and theorized (43).

It will, therefore, be important to use an intersectional lense in order to determine how the different spaces and places affect the characters according to their 'situations' within the short stories.

There are various ways to analyze space and place, such as looking at the more apparent environments described in the text. However, the social context and feelings involved that come

with one's "place" are generally referred to indirectly. Since these critical notions cannot exist without each other, because they usually have dialectical relationships to one another, just as a sense of the private cannot exist without one of the public, this makes them difficult or nearly impossible to separate. These binaries are necessary in order to understand how we act and see ourselves, and to recognize one's commonalities with, and separate existence from, others. They are also, however, extremely important to reinforcing established values that stem from postcolonial practices and discourses affecting how identity is created, as well as affecting how identities may be challenged and transformed. Or as John Dixon and Kevin Durrheim state:

> Collective identities are typically fashioned through symbolic contrasts between 'our space' and 'their space', expressed in terms of 'paradigmatic oppositions' such as marginal/central, primitive/civilized, or First World/Third World…place identity derives not only from individuals' attachments to their immediate environments, but also from their 'dis-identification' with others' spaces and from their relationship to dominant ideologies (34).

It stands to reason that there are many other ways in which the characters can be analyzed. However, for the purpose of this thesis, ***space*** will generally refer to the physical and geographical signs and discourses associated with a ***public*** spatial entity or environment, and ***place*** will mainly refer to the ***private*** affective and ideological associations for an individual or group, unless otherwise specified.

Alex Mahoudeau explains the humanistic perspective of geography developed by Yi-Fu Tuan and summarizes these concepts in as simple a manner as possible:

> Space, argues Tuan, is not a single thing but can rather be approached as a multiplicity of mental constructions which all rely on the interaction between the human body and its environment" and he adds that a "sense of place comes from habit and practice. It is the phenomenon which conducts a street to become from

> "one street", "one's street." It is associated to a form of knowledge and memory of place, as much as symbolic projection (n.p.).

I would further add Mahoudeau's idea that "the model [of humanistic geography] does provide a strong approach to question the human and social experience of space and place. Focusing on these experiences, the importance of"what is not seen"" in geography, on imaginaries and representations, takes its entire value" (n.p.). It is these representations that I will try to find and analyze in order to discover how space and place affect the migrant bodies of the characters in these short story collections.

In the context of my thesis, space refers to the physical aspects of a proscribed public environment for the migrant, who experiences the effects of hegemonic social values. This can occur through the characters' own interpretations, their appropriations of such spaces, as well as their ignorance of, or ambivalences towards, associated hegemonic valencies.

Place, then, relates to the individual's experience of actual and imagined discourses as it affects them as well as the collective diaspora's feelings, etc. within the personal spheres.

Though space and place are powerful forces that enable a sense of belonging and thus conformity, they may also subvert the way identity is created, felt, and experienced. Antony Easthope says: "Places can be understood as nodal points within networks of social relations that have a particular significance for a person or group of people. Understood in this way, the concept of place is taken to mean more than physical locality" (137). Accordingly, it will be important for me to recognize those instances within the texts that are imbued with social and personal meaning. Also, when looking at place, it will be important to notice how the 'others' of the collective associated hegemonic community/ies also react, if at all; it might be above and beyond the reaction of a single individual character. Additionally, instances of gender disparity, for example in social mobility, will also be telling in how postcolonial discourses affect the gendered migrant characters within the short stories. Massey argues that:

> Spaces and places, and our senses of them (and such related things as our degrees of mobility) are gendered through and through. Moreover, they are gendered in a myriad different ways, which vary between cultures and over time. And this gendering of space and place both reflects and has effects back on the ways in which gender is constructed and understood in the societies in which we live (186).

Therefore, analyzing how gender, as related to social mobility, is represented throughout the texts will enable me to ascertain how the migrant characters are affected by their environments.

As an example to highlight the differences between space and place we can look at how it is understood that under normal circumstances a person will not haphazardly enter the house of another because they know it is someone else's home; it belongs to someone else; it is their private place where they may feel (hopefully) grounded and safe, feel comfortable and at "home," or at the very least may exist privately. Even though others may be able to enter this space (someone's home) physically, conventionally they do not do so without being invited because of the cultural significations associated with it as a private place. Another example would be how a ghetto[3] is both a technical term for a particular kind of sociological space that is inhabited by a large proportion of a particular group of people (i.e. from the Caribbean), but enclosed in a hegemonic space, a majority, and one whereby socio-economics and social history – such as racial or ethnolinguistic exploitation and tensions, politics, and their associated social discourses**,** create conflicting attitudes and practices towards the ghetto's environment as a space and as a place. Daniel Schwartz loosely defines this charged and complicated term by stating that: "All definitions of "ghetto" tend to draw on some combination of the following attributes: compulsion, homogeneity, spatial segregation, immobility, and socioeconomic deprivations. Yet they do not always incorporate every feature, nor do they agree over how

[3] The word "ghetto" comes from the Jewish area of Venice, the Venetian Ghetto in Cannaregio, traced to a special use of Venetian ghèto, or "foundry", as there was one near the site of that city's ghetto in 1516.[6] By 1899 the term had been extended to crowded urban quarters of other minority groups. https://en.wikipedia.org

these traits should be ranked in importance or understood" (3-4). This is especially evident in terms of whether one is perceived as, or perceives oneself as, an insider or an outsider, or experiences it as a home or refuge, or as a foreign, threatening place to be avoided. As McKittrick and Peake suggest:

> what is important about these spatialities is how the division of continuous territory into 'insides' and 'outsides' facilitates the categorization of groups into 'us' v. 'them'. ... racialized, gendered, and classed identities [are] what [they are] and [do what they do] precisely because of how [they are] given spatial expression' (ibid.:7). In other words, these spacialities are not simply reflections of axes of power; rather, they are constitutive of them" (41).

David Sibley further adds that "The neglect of a black perspective has resulted in white view of blackness as 'other', and the perceived 'problems' of black people are essentially problems defined in terms of a white world-view. ... He [Harold Rose: a black American geographer] also recognized the importance of subjectivity when he noted that black people might reject externally assigned terms, such as 'ghetto'" (153). As McKittrick, Peake and Sibley state, there are multiple dichotomies and forces that may affect the characters which would also affect how they experience their environments. These dichotomies within the social spaces, affecting the intersectional components of space and place, cannot function without one another, and affect differing subjects. Kimberlé Crenshaw's notion of intersectionality allows for further depth when one is analyzing the different components affecting the migrant characters. According to her:

> to say that a category such as race or gender is socially constructed is not to say that that category has no significance in our world. On the contrary, a large and continuing project for subordinated people - and indeed, one of the projects for which postmodern theories have been very helpful - is thinking about the way

> power has clustered around certain categories and is exercised against others" (1296-98).

It is these differing power structures that need to be analyzed in order to define how the spaces and places affect the characters in the stories. Accordingly, in regards to space and place, Yi Fu Tuan states that

> As location, place is one unit among other units to which it is linked by a circulation net; the analysis of location is subsumed under the geographer's concept and analysis of space. Place, however, has more substance than the word *location* suggests: it is a unique entity, a 'special ensemble' (Lukermann, 1964, p.70); it has a history and meaning. Place incarnates the experiences and aspirations of a people. Place is not only a fact to be explained in the broader frame of space, but it is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning (387).

It is through these perspectives of space and place, as experienced by the characters, that their own idea about their degrees of belonging will be recognized. This is, of course, reflected in language. Such an example is the protagonist from the short story "Train to Montreal" by Brand, the way she feels while walking down the street or taking the train, etc., versus how the protagonist from the short story "No Rinsed Blue sky, No Red Flower Fences," also by Brand, feels while "stuck" in her apartment. One feels as though she doesn't belong to the public space of the train because of the lack of "others" like her, while the other character feels bereft of her Caribbean "home" and attempts to reinscribe it within her apartment in Canada.

In other words, space and place in this project, refers to the environments associated with an emotional state or relationship, such as love or hate, fear or courage, where one may consider themselves as belonging or not, and where identifications or presumptions of self and of others are grounded through physical, discursive, social, and symbolic markers. Community

is also another example of how individuals are either included or excluded through space and place. Looking at the different communities that the characters mention will also help build a framework within which belonging and unbelonging are evident.

In short, the relationship to place is often a truly visceral one, yet the establishment of one's feelings about and interactions with a place often do not become an issue in a society's cultural discourses and practices until colonial interventions or postcolonial diasporic influences, experiences, shifts, radically disrupt, alienate, subvert or damage one's sense or experience of 'space' as 'place.' (Ashcroft et al 161). Places are important for one's sense of identity, and the way the characters are made to interpret these places is significant. The fight for one's identity also hinges on how these discourses influence each other through their interactions.

My analyses of the selected texts by the aforementioned Caribbean expatriate authors will foreground instances where cultural, postcolonial and diasporic values affect the major and minor subjects/characters within the narratives through their interactions with space and place, effectively raising questions about how representations of social identities and relations impose and reinforce established and learned or acquired practices and discourses in regards to diverse cultural and geographical environments, including strong ideological associations and beliefs that demarcate the territories and associated values of the migrant subjects. Determining how identity is perceived, created and represented, in terms of how space and place are ideologically inscribed, will require me to review textual examples of cultural creation. This is primarily achieved through my initial comparisons and analyzes of significant recurrent kinds of spaces and places within the narratives. Subsequently, I analyse the characters' senses of belonging, insecurity, displacement and relocation in terms of affect, of their emotional, psychological, and sociopolitical states of integration and alienation. I further analyse and theorize the characters' relationships to space and place. As Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson put it:

> By taking a pre-existing, localized "community" as a given starting point, [the articulation of spatial arenas] fails to examine sufficiently the processes (such as the structures of place or locality in the first instance). … Colonialism, then, represents the displacement of one form of interconnection by another … [it is] by always foregrounding the spatial distribution of hierarchical power relations, [that] we can better understand the process whereby a space achieves a distinctive identity as a place. Keeping in mind that notions of locality or community refer both to a demarcated physical space and to clusters of interaction, we can see that the identity of a place emerges by the intersection of its specific involvement in a system of hierarchically organized spaces with its cultural construction as a community or locality (8).

Thus, identifying representations of key spaces for the characters in the selected narratives of the characters' native lands and in Canada, especially regarding the ways in which they can be said to represent "structures of feeling" and "demarcate … clusters of interaction" (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992, p.8), is an essential component of this thesis. As Andrew Teverson and Sara Upstone state:

> engagement with space is often expressed through the awareness of *location* as a factor is profoundly important. The idea that place plays a significant role in how one defines one's identity and, equally, how that identity is defined by others, is continually foregrounded in postcolonial studies. In particular, the colonial manipulation of national boundaries and the subsequent challenge for postcolonial states in forming cohesive identities within the terms of these inherited boundaries that have made the nation a central feature in discussion postcolonial identity (2).

One of the methods that helps pinpoint these instances is the identification and analysis of textual uses of geographical concepts and markers, such as borders and maps, etc., which are

important in determining the characters' views of their "native," and diasporic spaces and places. It is important to note that obvious geographical tools such as street names and cultural landmarks may not be used specifically by the authors or by the characters within the stories. A close look at the setting of the stories should allow me to determine certain demarcating "borders" that would affect how space and place are recognized, such as a specific street, neighborhood, institution, building, house, etc. Means of transportation, or simply methods of movement throughout these different narrative environments could also be important, such as in Brand's short story discussed in Chapter 1; "Train to Montreal." The fact that this story takes place mostly on the train demonstrates how such a public environment can affect one's sense of otherness and cultural unbelonging. Here the train can be considered a non-place. Marc Augé identifies certain public environments as non-places. He states that:

> If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place. The hypothesis advanced here is that supermodernity produces non-places, meaning spaces which are not themselves anthropological places and which, unlike Baudelairan modernity, do not integrate the earlier places: instead these are listed, classified, promoted to the status of 'places of memory', and assigned to a circumscribed and specific position. … Place and non-place are rather like opposed polarities: the first is never completely erased, the second never totally completed; they are like palimpsests on which the scrambled game of identity and relations is ceaselessly rewritten. But non-places are the real measure of our time; one that could be quantified - with the aid of a few conversions between area, volume and distance, by totalling all the air, rail and motorway routes…(all of the) 'means of transport' (77-9).

Augé's definition of non-place represents the non-permanence of the environment within which the characters find themselves through various means of mobility. These moments are a potential physical demonstration of the characters' sense of cultural connectivity, or the lack thereof through their ability to move. The characters' relationships to these spaces, and their degree of movement will provide useful textual examples in order to identify and subsequently map the relevant spaces and places that affect the characters.

The key locations of the narratives have been identified as significant within the text through the characters' responses to them. In analyzing their frequency, commonalities, status or progression from a mere sense of space to one of a significant place – be it positive, negative or ambivalent – I was able to recognize how these environments were inscribing postcolonial discourses. Textual evidence as to the representations of a sense of displacement and relocation, of that of belonging and insecurity, in relation to those of space and place, is important in determining the overall effects of the representations of the characters' emotional, psychological and socio-political states of integration and alienation..

One of the ways in which space and place can affect the characters' sense of integration or alienation is through the portrayals of national identity. Another way which one may identify and possibly contest their current foreign locations' affecting immigrant and diasporic characters is through their attempts at reinstating nostalgic ideas or discourses within a new environment in order to render it more familiar or acceptable. However, this can be difficult due to the practices and discourses of space and place that are already hegemonic within a particular location. This gap or disconnect between the culture of origin and the host culture can create a context in which the host society's dominant ideologies of location affect the self and one's view of one's identity as different, as Other, as Sibley's quote previously emphasized.

However, not only are the characters' names sometimes absent, but their location, origin or ethnic and cultural background often go unmentioned. I believe the authors used these

techniques in their stories in the same manner that Brand believes, as she mentions in *A Map to the Door of No Return*, that the stories of origins are complex, and as much as they are stories that we tell ourselves and pass along, they also hold power over our own bodies and perceptions of the environments around us, creating and recreating the spaces and places we imagine. This lack of information is problematic; however, there is most likely a valid reason for the authors' neglect to mention this information. Instances of (un)belonging within the selected literary texts are represented by differing physical or spatial dichotomies concerning mobility, the representation of feelings regarding the character's occupation of spaces and places, but mostly through dramatizations of social interactions. All three primary short story collections, as well as the aforementioned more secondary work by Brand, provide narratives that demonstrate overlapping cultures coming into conflict, especially in regards to the notions of "over here" and "over there". They also look into how diverse immigrant and diasporic characters interact within the spaces and places of postcolonial "home" cultures versus metropolitan, Canadian ones. The sense of (un)belonging is often made evident by emphasis on the constructed environment of the streets, as well as by the more personal environments of the characters' homes. Correlations and contrasts are also made evident in several stories between the place where one lives within the new urban environments and the surrounding communities, including their effects upon individual im/migrants. Or, as Judith Misrahi-Barak points out, "[The Caribbean-Canadian short story] offers an ideal projecting canvas for the construction of a self-image, be it individual or collective…the cityscape provides opportunity to recompose the inner and aesthetic space, mapping out new territories for the self" (1). Thus, looking at the subject through public and private lenses is essential to understanding and investigating how otherness and the colonial identity are socially and imaginatively constructed. It is through such criticism that the boundaries delineating these spaces and places can be shifted. Homi Bhabha states that it is possible to shift these boundaries through postcolonial criticism in order to assert

the fact that cultural and political identities are constructed through alterity; that through identifying the places and spaces associated with otherness, boundaries can be determined and hence critically analyzed : “Postcolonial critical discourses require forms of dialectical thinking that do not disavow or sublate the otherness (alterity) that constitutes the symbolic domain of psychic and social identifications” (Bhabha 192).

Instances of “otherness” or alterity emphasize how identification of self is created and reinscribed. As Bhabha states; “The Other must be seen as the necessary negation of a primordial identity – cultural or psychic – that introduces the system of differentiation which enables the ‘cultural’ to be signified as a linguistic, symbolic, historic reality” (119). These moments where the characters recognize their own otherness allow them to register their oppression, thus offering a postcolonial discourse.

The thesis also attempts to clarify the ideological and cultural implications of the recreation of self by Caribbean immigrants through the selected fictional works’ representations of diverse environments within the Caribbean and Canada. For example, Amaryl Chanady states that

> [i]n contemporary short stories, novels, and autobiographical writings, their [the trans-american outcasts’] predicament is represented by complex narrative strategies of spatialization that showcase a particular connection between these individuals and place - both the place in which they now live and the hemisphere as a whole. The literary figuration of displacement within the city and emplacement within a particular building or neighborhood is often richly symbolic of the despair of the trans-American outcast. This figuration takes into account not only the situation of the marginal subject with respect to the host society, but also that of the links between different parts of the Americas.

> Displacement in the city, in other words, can also symbolize a particular trans-American consciousness" (336).

Therefore, analyzing the connections between the individual characters' trans-American migrations, as well as through group dynamics, along with the narrative strategies of the use of space and place, can provide evidence of a diasporic consciousness that the authors attempt to simulate within the narrative. Caren Kaplan argues that geopolitical and geographical locations that have historically been perceived through a temporally linear frame cannot account for the creation and analysis of the complex identities that are the results of diasporas and displacement. The complex relationships such postcolonial subjects have towards space and place allows writers and critics to subvert the stereotypes created by colonial discourses. For instance, "[i]n identifying marginal space as both a site of repression and resistance, location becomes historicized and theoretically viable – a space of future possibilities as well as the nuanced articulation of the past" (Kaplan in Grewal and Kaplan 143-4). The complexity of the use of space and place as explained by Chanady and Kaplan is also emphasized by Misrahi-Barak, who also explores how representations of the city's diverse environments affect Caribbean-Canadian narratives. In her readings, the physical environments characters interact with act as symbolic representations of their social and emotional environments. For instance, concrete, particular spaces of the cityscape – such as the street or workplaces – act as metaphoric symbols of the barriers that West Indian individuals experience living in Canada. Re-using the example of the house, I will offer a concrete example from Misrahi-Barack's article of the ways in which aspects of the cityscape affect the characters:

> The house is the smallest unit in the city but contains some of the problematics of the city at large. The house, or the apartment, in Caribbean-Canadian fiction, often offers a concrete image of what it can be like to have emigrated from the Caribbean to Canada. In Clarke's, but also in other writers' short stories, the house

> is often that of the Canadian employer for whom the West-Indian domestic works (3).

Misrahi-Barack suggests that the representations of houses the immigrant characters live in frequently reflect the oppressiveness of the city but on a smaller physical scale, as well as symbolizing the master-slave trope that is still pervasive within postcolonial literature, since the house within which they work is not theirs. Space and place are important markers from which the identities of the individual characters will be formed. Identities as a result of diaspora and displacement are complex. Such complex experiences of the space and place dialectics, as we shall see, are particularly prevalent in fictions by the authors I have chosen to study.

There were several concepts that presented themselves more clearly as the thesis evolved. In the conclusion, I attempt to address the questions I asked throughout this thesis as discussed in the introduction, as well as reiterate the different demarcating concepts.

* * *

My analysis of the environments experienced by the characters within the selected narratives – that is, how characters internalize their environment vis-à-vis their sense of identity – will determine how the representations of space and place evidence and enable the reinscription of marginal identities. Discourses, such as unequal power relations, segregation through employment opportunities or education, etc., will highlight how the characters are marginalized and othered. I hypothesize that certain geographical locations and markers within the narratives, such as their living spaces, areas of employment, and even the non-places, will play an important role in determining the characters' experiences and how they identify as other, or assimilate, in comparison to their home cultures versus the hegemonic host cultures of non-Caribbean peoples and societies. For example, instances of nostalgia in regards to places

of origin, compared to spaces and places of migration, will likely hold a positive association for the characters, depending on the circumstances in which they find themselves. The identification of such literary figurations of displacement (mobility) and their spatialization will help me to recognize moments of (un)belonging, identity creation, conflict and acceptance, of characters' integration within the narratives. Critical attention to space and place is therefore crucial to analyzing how representations of location are shown to be internalized and externalized, reinscribed and resisted, vis-a-vis established discourses and values, similarly to how Misrahi-Barack used the unit of the house to analyze the characters' relationship to their surroundings. Unfortunately, due to the existing colonial discourses at play within society at large, for most of these characters, I believe, there is little chance of actual integration. Furthermore, I believe that the characters' gender will also strongly affect their integration in the host society.

My research method consists of first identifying representations of key spaces in the characters' native lands and in Canada. Geographical concepts and markers, such as borders and maps, etc., are used in order to determine the characters' views of their "native" and diasporic, migrant spaces. Moreover, the primary texts' representations of the streets, houses or apartments, buildings, windows, means of transportation, etc**.,** present moments within the texts where analyses of space and place can be said to prove or disprove the discourses that create moments of belonging or unbelonging. Consequently, representations of differing means of mobility and of cultural connectivity will provide useful textual examples to identify, and subsequently map relevant spaces as important affective, nostalgic, oppressive, assimilationist or contestatory places, therefore establishing their ideological significance from a postcolonial perspective. As was mentioned, enumerating and mapping the narratives' key locations and settings is essential to exploring and analyzing the frequency of their appearance and their commonalities, and especially their status or progression from a space to that of a significant

place for the characters. Textual evidence as to the representations of a sense of displacement and relocation, of belonging and insecurity, are central to the determination of the overall effects of the characters' emotional, psychological and socio-political states of integration**,** alienation or ambivalence.

The thesis will also examine how Caribbean expatriate literature set within the borders of Canada effectively contextualizes and explores the subjects' social identities and relations determined by the ideologies created, managed and represented by the dominant spaces and places within which im/migrants live their lives. It will also examine how such subjects' are represented as ignoring, resisting and/or submitting to hegemonic values, discourses and practices regarding space and place. Accordingly, the thesis remarks upon the ideological and cultural implications of the spatialized representations of my selected corpus' Caribbean expatriate characters' navigation of their environments through both the Caribbean and Canadian contexts. The analyses of the chosen texts offers insight into the everyday colonizing and discursive forces which make up an important part of identity formation and integration within the spaces and places that are represented as being crucial to the im/migrant characters' lives in these Caribbean-Canadian short stories.

Chapter 1: Space and Community

> There is the sense in the mind of not being here or there, of no way out or in. As if the door had set up its own reflection. Caught between the two we live in the Diaspora, in the sea in between. Imagining our ancestors stepping through these portals one senses people stepping out into nothing; one senses a surreal space, an inexplicable space. One imagines people so stunned by their circumstances, so heartbroken as to refuse reality. Our inheritance in the Diaspora is to live in this inexplicable space. That space is the measure of our ancestors' step through the door toward the ship. One is caught in the few feet in between. The frame of the doorway is the only space of true existence *(A Map to the Door of No Return;* Brand 20).

As Brand so eloquently puts it in the above quotation from *A Map to the Door of No Return*, the process of integration, of "entry," correlates directly with how members of immigrant communities interact with and develop narratives of public identity within public spaces. Even though origins are constantly redefined through interactions and assimilation, there is, nevertheless, a starting point that guides how our surroundings are interpreted and internalized. How one views whether one belongs or not, is already, to a certain extent, pre-established by the hegemonic social values present in the environment. Naturally, where you are born and grow up cannot be changed, which means that individuals or groups become othered due to the difference produced by their origins. This "us" vs "them" dichotomy creates "otherness" and therefore exclusion. It is also important to note that exclusionary power structures are manufactured by those who are from "here," so that the cultural origins, values and ideals of the "other" will not be integrated into the established discourses of the local inhabitants or users of public spaces. This is not always a conscious occurrence; it can be deeply rooted in the host cultural or individual unconscious through colonial and existing power structures. As a side note, let's say that it may not always only be migrant subjects that are excluded by the ways in which "power structures" imagine, construct and control or rule over "public spaces." There are many variables that can come into play, such as: language, gender, class, education, etc.

The values, as well as the ideals and influences attached to the spaces are constantly in flux, re-asserting, re-making, and being re-defined based on the activities and interactions of those who use them. Therefore, public spaces are affected by the differences of those newly entering them, as much as they are re-inscribed by those who already dominate or feel at home in them or who have no will or knowledge to make changes to the space. The correlation between the tension of the migrant experiences of public spaces in a host context and the "native" local and exclusionary power structures is based on different origins. It is also present across all categories, such as race, gender, class, etc., that frame the lived experience within those spaces and places. Hence Gupta and Ferguson argue that:

> 'Multiculturalism' is both a feeble acknowledgement of the fact that im/migrant cultures have lost their moorings in definite places, and an attempt to subsume this plurality of cultures within the framework of a national identity. Similarly, the idea of "subcultures" attempts to preserve the idea of distinct "cultures" while acknowledging the relation of different cultures to a dominant culture within the same geographical and territorial space. Conventional accounts of ethnicity, even when used to describe cultural differences in settings where people from different religions live side by side, rely on an unproblematic link between identity and place (7).

In short, the notion that there are distinct cultures sharing the same spaces means that those who are able to conform or belong to the national identity are better able to belong. Therefore, there are those who do not belong through their difference and inability to conform.

The epigraph by Brand evokes how the origins can both be important, or "nurturing," and paralysing -- "too much has been made of them" -- because they are experienced on a personal level and may have different meanings or connotations for different individuals, yet still evoke the need for belonging.

My selected texts represent how migrants can be treated in exclusionary ways that are the result of historical conquest. Origins and exclusionary power structures as they are represented in the public spaces are demonstrative of one's ability to belong according to how comfortably one is able to navigate said environment. In order to belong in the host environment, changes must be made on behalf of the newcomer. These changes are necessary in order for the migrant to conform. The process of shedding cultural markers of differences in order to blend in is illustrated through Clarke's short story "Initiation"; the feeling of "not belonging" is analysed through Bissoondath's short story "Dancing"; the fact of being marked for exclusion and discrimination based on skin colour, accents, dress, cultural practices, education, or of just presenting a general "difference" is discussed in my analysis of Brand's short story "Train to Montreal." Origins affect all individuals' sense of space and place, whether they are native or not. However, if one's identity is recognized as being migrant, it will affect one's experiences of the host country's public spaces. Immigrant status is usually recognized through visual categorizations, such as ethnicity and cultural dress according to gender and class while the immigrant navigates spaces and non-places. One's actions within the public spaces are not equal, as the exclusionary power structures of the white hegemonic discourses in Canada coerce those with visible differences to use only certain ones, and thus become marginalized. Furthermore, these discourses affect not only those with visible differences but also go deeper, to include ethnicity, class, gender, as well as those differences that may not be initially apparent, such as sexual orientation, etc. It takes an intersectional analysis to give a proper account of them. Different kinds of reactions to or interactions with a host country's public spaces may play a role in or affect "fluctuating definitions of [immigrants] identit(ies)." They are not in themselves definitions of identity. They may lead one to define oneself in new ways or to see oneself through new and different lenses, but they are not necessarily the way one would choose to define oneself. Such instances of usage of and encounters within public

spaces may lead to fluctuating definitions of identity, especially for immigrants, since immigrants' sense of marginalization as a result, for instance, of cultural nostalgia, conflicts and tension, very often create problems with belonging to the new environment.

As this thesis will show, stories by Brand, Bissoondath and Clarke represent public spaces in Canada as alienating for immigrants from a Caribbean island. There is a strong emphasis on the ways in which the migrant characters are already assigned an identity as "other" and are forced to function within society according to the terms and practices set out by the hegemonic values created through the colonial past. Therefore, traversing the public spaces in Canada automatically assigns an identity to one, whether or not one belongs. As Massey suggests: "localities, as I see them, are not just about physical buildings, nor even about capital momentarily imprisoned; they are about the intersection of social activities and social relations and, crucially, activities and relations which are necessarily, by definition, dynamic, changing. There is no stable moment, in the sense of stasis, if we define our world, or our localities, ab initio in terms of change" (Massey, 136). The localities, as Massey suggests, are representative of how the social discourses affect and create them, and therefore, of how they inscribe meaning onto those who inhabit them. In a postcolonial environment, such as in Canada, the localities are highly subject to socio-political and economic forces. These forces are part of the social dynamics which create marginal spaces. The social constructs then force the "others" to inhabit those marginalized environments. Massey explains how people, especially those in poverty, are basically assigned areas according to their education level, skills, and along racial and gender lines - a situation which thereby limits the movement of individuals, of groups, even whole communities.

In order to understand how displaced migrant subjects enter into a new world, enter new spaces, with specific underlying baggage that affects their perception and ways of internalizing new spaces, it is important to recognize the reasons for which they are generally thrust into

these new environments. One of the main reasons for the characters to move from their country of origin to Canada is financial. Another reason is the political climate in their place of origin. The characters hope to gain a higher and better social status through their displacement. This in turn leads them to send money home in order to help those to whom they are attached. Another reason is the political climate and whether the characters feel at "home" in their home. As Chanady puts it:

> This displaced subject [the trans-American outcast] differs from the canonical immigrant by remaining on the margins of society with little hope of eventual integration. The trans-American outcast is to be found throughout the Americas and is the product of various connections among different places in the hemisphere (336).

As connections are made and broken by immigrants between different localities, affecting both how they internalize them and are perceived, the notion of understanding one's origins, or one's self, shifts dramatically and so those left on the margins have limited means of integrating. Therefore, the public spaces become sites of repression through exclusionary power structures. The short stories being analyzed are rich in textual examples of the migrant subjects contesting their sense of belonging or unbelonging.

Bissoondath and the Political Space

The short story "Digging Up The Mountains," by Bissoondath**,** is a good example of characters who are drastically torn from their origins. It dramatizes complex social relations as a result of political upheaval. In this case, the problems occured after "the island" became independent. The upheaval causes Hari, the protagonist, and his family to leave their home because they are no longer seen as part of the people of the island, as they are considered to be too American by their neighbors. This is due to the fact that they were part of the wealthier

class who could afford to "donate" money to the two opposing political parties during the rise of the nationalist movement in order to try to retain their social standing. However, because of disruptive political changes, they lose their coveted space within society and the place they once considered home:

> The island, however, was no longer that in which his father had lived. Its simplicity, its unsophistication, had vanished over the years and been replaced by the cynical politics of corruption that plagues all the urchin nations scrambling in the larger world. Independence - written ever since with a capital I, small i being considered a spelling mistake at best, treason at worst - had promised the world. It had failed to deliver, and the island, in its isolation, blamed the world (2).

The riots and demonstrations turned into a regime change. Before, those of South Asian heritage held more social power as they were part of the "higher" class because of the colonialists' position in Asia. However, during the civil upheaval, the members of the Black communities had revolted and taken over power. Nevertheless, it is possible to consider that Hari is the one who is unable to change in order to fit within these new societal norms and that his own cultural memory has been altered by nostalgia for what he has "lost." The regime changes that thrust the island into isolation, into a marginalized space within the global sphere, even affects the way the islanders speak to each other, for instance when Hari "thought the use of the island accent a little overdone. Did this election's switch from Oxford drawl to island lilt really fool those at whom it was aimed? Did they believe him to be one of them?" (5). Islanders "forcing" a change back to nationalist ideals through such cultural markers of "Island lilt" rather than "Oxford drawl" demonstrates how much colonialism has already impacted them. These binaries demonstrate how there is a "them" and an "us" that has been created within what used to be a single unified "Nation." However, since Hari was part of the socio-economic class that

helped subjugate his own people through colonial hegemonic values, it stands to reason that to him things have so drastically changed that they have, in a sense, “died.”

It is clear Hari no longer recognizes the place he once considered his home following the changed political atmosphere of the Island. Hari and his family are no longer considered of “the people" and must relocate in order to live safely, as there is no hope for integration: “His wife, stabbing at her eyes with a tissue, said, “At least we not dead.” Hari said, “We’re not?” (19). In other words, Hari compares his forced exile from the island to death itself partly because that might have been his only other option had he decided to stay; however, the sense of self upon which his identity depended has also been altered; there is no going back to how things were before, as in death. Their identity, their collective persona as Trinidadians of South Asian heritage, is directly linked to where they felt grounded through this social economic class on the island. To be relocated forcefully creates the feeling of death in Hari, the renunciation to the island where he has built his life friendships, traditions, etc. To be forcefully transplanted to another country because one has been marginalized by their own society forces one to rebuild and to recreate one’s identity based on one’s pre-existing self. However, the discourses, customs, values, etc., of the new environment, including one’s interpretation of the new space or perception of the place of origin, also affects the re-creation of one’s identity.

One must consider as well how the host culture’s hegemonic groups perceive and react to the immigrants. Hari’s choices are to stay and face the threat of actual death and social dislocation for himself and his family, or to leave and experience the figural death of everything he had once known. To be blocked off and thrust into an insecure future causes Hari and his family to grieve for the space they had once inhabited. The public environment he had known no longer exists, and the new one does not accept them because of paradigmatic shifts in hegemonic discourses. This space has transformed and now excludes Hari and his family due to the beliefs of those in power, who no longer welcome individuals such as them and those in

similar situations. It is impossible for them to change their past decisions and actions in order to suddenly realign themselves with the dominant ideologies of the island. These actions cannot be undone or interpreted differently. Where he had previously enjoyed the social position of the colonizer, he was then forced to become "colonized" through these social changes. Hari even states, "He knew the way of the island: nowhere was truth more relative" (13). The truth being relative is an example of how the colonizer/colonized binaries are strongly present therefore, highly affecting Hari's perceived space in society. To stay, for Hari and his family, would cause a major shift in what he considers an important part of his identity; rather than risk a complete loss of identity through its destruction by the new dominant cultural ideologies which have brought about a loss of social status and economic privilege, Hari and his family have shifts in perception. It is these shifts in perception, based on whether one stands within a marginalized space, that affect how the discourses and binaries of the colonizer/colonized create or recreate one's identity and how changes are forced upon individuals and groups. According to Chanady,

> Within the Americas, the displacement of individuals on a large scale has contributed to the emergence of many spaces that we could identify as translocalities. Cities such as Toronto, Montreal, and New York, as well as border regions in the southwestern United States, are only the most obvious examples of localities in which people from many parts of the hemisphere live together, often in harmony, but also frequently in a state of friction (335).

These translocalities occur because of the "death" and "rebirth" of the migrants within new spaces. Their identities need to be reshaped/recreated for the migrants to deal with the new spaces. The process of rebuilding falls to the individuals thrust into these new translocalities. This process of creation can be harmonious since the individuals are all attempting to do the same thing. However, it can also be fraught with friction because of the forced changes they

must go through and their resistance to the development of new identities, such as Hari's feeling that they had "died." The act of adapting to their new surroundings forces them to create a new identity. One's sense of the socio-political and ideological changes occurring on the island is further exemplified through the new environments, or translocalities. An example of this can be found within the short story "The Revolutionary " by Bissoondath, where the first person narrator is described as an educated individual from Trinidad who is continuing his university education in Canada. He encounters another Trinidadian, Eugene, who is also furthering his education; however, the former has a very negative response to the latter. The language used by the author ensures that the difference between the two is unmistakable. The narrator is portrayed as educated and "normal," whereas Eugene is given the stereotypical attributes of an uneducated Islander who is attempting to behave like someone he clearly is not, a revolutionary. For instance, we are told that he is studying classic British Literature yet he wants to return to Trinidad in order to free the proletariat so that the people of the island truly govern themselves. "I going back to help change things. I want to make life easier for the masses, for our heroic people" (23). The narrator makes it clear that this character has no true understanding of his goals as well as no idea how to bring them to fruition as he asks if Eugene will go into politics in order to further his goals and help "free the masses." Eugene's response is lacking: "Brother, the suffering masses need more than lies from politicians ... is just that it have a better way to do things ... A gun. Is the only way the socio-economic situation in Trinidad going to change. A gun! ... The glorious, liberating path of socialist-proletarian revolution" (24). One can imagine the potential consequences of such actions upon the varying groups on the Island, including his own. The main character even asks Eugene what will happen afterwards, and he responds "That have nothing to do with me ... My job is to go in like a hurricane and destroy the blood sucking superstructure of the whole fascist and capitalist regime in the place ... then I'll leave after doing my socialist duty" (26). This is exemplified by the aforementioned

character of Hari, from "Digging Up the Mountains," as an example of how such ideals may lend themselves to the overall themes of Bissoondath's short story collection. The first person narrator of the short story "The Revolutionary," whose judgemental perceptions characterize the character as foolish, wants the reader to understand the embarrassment he feels at being "associated" with this caricatured version of himself because they come from "the [same] Island." This narrative strategy leaves the reader embarrassed on behalf of the narrator and views this secondary character as the uneducated "Islander trope." Not only does the author demonstrate this through the way Eugene speaks and through the misspelling of words but also through the way he is caricatured. The main character "pretended not to notice" (28) as Eugene trips over his too long feet (20). Hence**,** we, the readers, also become complicit in viewing Eugene through an uncharitable lense, therefore passing the same judgment on him. Space here is represented not only through the island but also through institutions and communities. The education system, especially that for higher learning, is geared towards creating a form of elitism that reproduces the social hierarchy. The narrator is effectively recreating this type of distinction between himself and Eugene by caricaturing him and not taking him seriously because of his mannerism. If the main character views Eugene in such a debasing fashion, what is it, we may ask ourselves, that would prompt him to look at him this way? Is it only the values of one who wants to return to "free" the people that makes him laughable, and embarrass the narrator to be associated with him? It is obvious that the narrator has much disdain for Eugene, not only for his naîve ideas about the revolution, but also strangely for his physique: his disdain is palpable through his physical description of Eugene, and of his idiom, how he uses "Island drawl" when speaking with the "brother." Eugene's looks are so described:

> The muscular arms swung loosely and rapidly, like run-away windshield wipers … [his feet were] much too large for his miniature stature, they were turned out in Charlie Chaplin manner and when he walked, they produced a sound not unlike

> that of swimming flippers on concrete … I glanced at his face; it reminded me of a piece of plastic softened over heat and shaped until taut by a malicious hand … droopy eyes, overdone nose … (20).

As readers, we may question why one character is caricatured and not the other when they both ostensibly come from Trinidad. The narrator's views are clearly considered to be of greater importance or more credible. This aspect of the story also exemplifies how perceptions and one's appropriation of space will marginalize Others, even if they are considered "brothers," as Eugene considered the narrator. One character, the narrator, represents one possibility of integration by having appropriated his new space within the public sphere and is able to adapt in order to conform. Or he believes he has because he sees his "brother" as backward and marginalized, whereas Eugene is marginalized and ridiculed because he is still fighting against these constraints. The fact that he finds his backwards "brother" unrealistic for attempting to fight these constraints leaves him uncomfortable: "A casual smoker, I suddenly needed a cigarette" (26). The main character is recreating the socio-political differences of his origins and reinscribed by his own migration to his adopted home country. It would seem that even with migration, those from similar origins may reproduce the hegemonic and stereotypical discourses that marginalize them in the first place, effectively reinscribing the subjugation of their own people. This may lead us to believe that they have not truly adapted to their new environment, nor fully let origins go, as they seem stuck between the discourses of both. As Catherine Belsey suggests; "it becomes apparent that literature as one of the most persuasive uses of language may have an important influence on the ways in which people grasp themselves and their relation to the real relations in which they live" (169). The narrative construction of the reader's judgment then is significant in creating and fixing the identities of the character. As readers we become complicit in the marginalization of the characters. Such passages within the texts emphasize the difficulties for im/migrants in adapting to or integrating

into new spaces. Consider Bissoondath's short story, "Dancing". In this story, the reader is introduced to a Trinidadian woman who has lived a simple life on the island and has been persuaded to come live with her sister in Toronto. She decides to go over against her landlord's advice:

> People don't like to hear the truth. They does get vex. But you know, Miss Sheila, people on this island too uppity for their own good. They lazy and they good-for-nothing. They don't like to work. And they so damn uppity they think they can go to Canada or the States and life easy. Well, it not easy. It very very hard and you have to work your ass off to get anywhere ... I admire you for wanting to improve your life but what you think you going to do in Canada? (186).

There are several factors at play in the neighbour's response to Miss Sheila James. He is her landlord but he is also of a higher social standing, more educated (because he is a doctor) and of South Asian descent, rather than Black. His answer comes from a place of racism and classism, potentially of sexism as well. After all, why should a poor, uneducated Black woman go to Canada to "improve" her life when he, the doctor, is unable to, or chooses not to? The position Miss Sheila James would occupy in Canada would not be much different than the one she occupies on the Island, as a cleaning lady for those who are better off. However, if the Doctor were to move to Canada, his situation would be much different, he would be at a greater disadvantage. Davis' opinion is one which somewhat corroborates the landlord's position: "While formal citizenship is, therefore, legally possible, and while citizenship in advanced postwar capitalist nations like Canada is often constructed as "ideal," the right to belong is one which has to be earned differently" (32). Upon arrival, she quickly realizes that even her family members have changed through their exposure to the new space of Toronto and as a result she feels alienated and misses her home. The sense of displacement and alienation that this

character experiences as a result of the radical changes that have affected her family members' personalities makes her aware of how she has perceived her own life in Trinidad:

> It look so strange to see Trinidadians in Carnival costumes dancing and jumping in them big, wide streets [of Toronto] ... Then she go on about all the money she be making and how easy her life was. I don't mind saying that make me cry, but the tears dry up fast-fast. She write how Canadians racialist as hell ... She say they hate Black people (183).

This quote demonstrates how some people from Trinidad attempt to try to keep their Trinidadian identity by celebrating their culture in public spaces. Fellow migrants like her siblings must "force" their culture to be seen and experienced, or reexperienced, through their appropriation of the streets in Carnival costumes so that their culture may be validated not only by themselves, but by the other inhabitants of this city through public displays of cultural difference. However, as the sister says, it does not seem to change the fact that "Canadians racialist as hell." Bissoondath himself, in his book *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, considers that:

> Multiculturalism, with all of its festivals and its celebrations, has done - and can do - nothing to foster a factual and clear-minded vision of our neighbours. Depending on stereotype, ensuring that ethnic groups will preserve their distinctiveness in a gentle and insidious form of cultural apartheid, multiculturalism has done little more than lead an already divided country down the path to further social divisiveness (82-3).

It is not only a sign of nostalgia or a celebration of "difference" but forcibly also a reinscription of stereotypes. It also demonstrates how their culture in this new space is only a shadow of what it was. Only offering a glimpse of the glamourous aspects of the original culture to the viewers on the street enables the loss of true understanding or connection associated with the

depth of meaning related to the context and original intent of such a cultural display. An example is when Miss Sheila suddenly perceives her own traditions differently because they are being copied, reimagined, and recreated in a new space. It makes one wonder how the original and new spaces are perceived. She notices that her brother and sister have been changed by their new environment as they give her grim advice on how to handle living in Toronto. She is told: "You have to become West-Indian" (191). Her response is indicative of someone who does not understand the changes and experiences her brother and sister have gone through in order to say such things to her: "But it sound like if all-you hiding from other people here" (191). Her sister adds:

> Anyways, look eh, girl, you going to learn in time. But lemme tell you one thing, and listen to me good. You must stick with your own, don't think that any honky ever going to accept you as one of them, if you want friends they going to have to be West-Indian … I don't even try to talk to white people now, I ain't have time or use for racialists (192).

Miss Sheila's sister's response demonstrates how segregation divides West-Indians, not only from white people, but also from "Others," since the characters choose to remain within the comfort of their own likeness rather than feel othered within other marginalized groups. As Marika Preziuso discusses:

> A recent translation of Caribbean identity has indeed resulted from a spatial and cultural dislocation of Caribbean people. They have transgressed the region's material and cultural borders in order to settle into other places and consequently, into their cultural imaginaries as well. The phenomenon of the Caribbean diasporas, and particularly the emigration of Caribbean people to the metropolitan centres - Britain, Canada, France and the USA - since the end of the Second World War, has been characterised both by internal heterogeneity and by unpredictable

> dynamics of adjustment and integration to the new environment. These relatively recent Caribbean diasporas invite discursive approaches that exceed a unitary definition of 'diaspora' in order to explain the mutually transformative effects that such experiences have on the subjects involved, their homelands and their host countries (149-50).

Unfortunately, the choice to remain separate creates a disconnection in the way Caribbean migrants remember their origins and the culture they believe to have had through such changes in perception brought about by their new locations. As Preziuso remarks: "Academic geography has an understanding and representation of 'space' that highlights visibility and physical presence, in line with which it dismisses as 'unreal' that which is less visible and impenetrable" (147). Celebrations of culture, such as festivals like the one described in Miss Sheila's sister's letter, potentially inscribe stereotypes and a false sense of remembrance of the original culture. Attempting to translate the culture, unfortunately, only leads to further dislocation, according to Preziuso, because of the alterations to memory based on distance through time and space and a general sense of nostalgia. Miss Sheila also experienced racism on the island, in her landlord's treatment of her, as well as

that of her various employers (she was a cleaning lady to other West-Indians of South Asian descent). These are aspects of "home" that her brother and sister conveniently "forget," especially when celebrating their own culture in the streets of Toronto through "Carnaval."

One of the characters states that he misses the warmth of the sunshine and of the people from back home: "Is the warmth I does miss, and I not talking only about the sun but people too. Man, I remember Trinidad people always leave their doors open day and night, and you could walk in at any time without calling first. Canajuns not like that. Doors shut up tight, eyes cold and hands in pocket. They's not a welcoming people" (198). Whereas Sheila, recently arriving from Trinidad, has not yet had time to become nostalgic for her home: "I was going to

tell them bout the doc, with the big house and the fence and broken bottles. I wanted to say even me did always keep my shack shut up because if you have nothing worth thiefing, people will still thief it, just for spite" (198). The difference in regards to the amount of time spent in Canada between these two characters (one living in Canada and the other freshly arrived to visit), has caused a significant difference in their remembrance of their earlier home.

Another short story by Bissoondath that further demonstrates the difficulties of migrant characters' feeling at home, whether in the Caribbean or in Canada, is "There Are A Lot of Ways to Die." In this story, Joseph, the protagonist, and his wife, moved back to the Caribbean from Canada in an attempt to set up a business, and by so doing, they also hope to help the people living in the community by providing sources of income through hiring workers. However, Joseph soon discovers that his cherished, nostalgic memories of the island, which have fueled his desire to return "home" to the community in which he feels he belongs, have skewed his perception of its reality:

> It put the lie to so much he had told his Canadian friends about the island. The morning rain wasn't as refreshing as he'd recalled it and the steam had left his memory altogether. How could he have sworn that the island experienced no humidity? Why had he, in all honesty, recalled tender tropical breezes when the truth, as it now enveloped him, was the exact, stifling opposite? Climate was not so drastically altered, only memory (77).

Joseph's sentiments toward the community he has returned to are inseparable from his disappointed thoughts and feelings about the climate. He is completely perturbed by the differences between his affective, wishful memories and the physical reality of the island, to such a point that he even contemplates going back to Canada: "Were not two dislocations enough in one man's lifetime? Would not yet a third prove him a fool?" (78). However, Joseph

feels that it would be considered a defeat if he were to leave the island for a second time in order to return to the success he had experienced in Toronto. What is more,

> Their return [to the island] had been jubilant. Friends and relatives treated it as a victory, seeking affirmation of the correctness of their cloistered life on the island, the return a defeat for life abroad ... The recollected civility of life in Toronto disturbed him, it seemed so distant. He remembered what a curious feeling of well-being had surged through him whenever he'd given directions to a stranger. Each time was like an affirmation of stability. Here, in an island so small that two leisurely hours in a car would reveal all, no one asked for directions, no one was a stranger. You couldn't claim the island: it claimed you (78-9).

Before returning to the Caribbean to live, Joseph was no longer a stranger in Toronto, so much so that he truly felt like he belonged, whereas upon his return to the island, he feels that he has lost control over his identity, that it is being pushed onto him by the other islanders since they believe that his return confirms the "correctness of their cloistered life on the island" and thus that the island has now "claimed him."

These shifts in identity formation can be seen by comparing "Digging Up the Mountains", through the character of Hari, and the short story "There Are a Lot of Ways to Die", through the character of Joseph. Hari believes he has experienced a type of death in being forced to migrate, whereas Joseph's return to the island makes him realize that his memory is not synonymous with reality. However, there is a significant difference between the two characters' diasporic trajectories; Hari does not return to Trinidad, whereas Joseph's return to the island leaves him feeling alienated and stifled. The process of becoming a migrant subject creates a symbolic "death" by which the characters must recreate their identities in relation to a new space in order to attempt to feel at home in the new environment. The general identity of those living on the island is partially linked by Joseph to the public and social spaces because

the island is so **"**small" and "cloistered" that "no one was a stranger". According to Joseph, the fact that everyone knows everyone else on the island cements what their social position is so their identity is quite fixed, whereas the freedom of one's anonymity in Toronto creates a type of legitimacy to one's identity as it is created/reinvented according to one's desires and circumstances, and where anonymity is possible through the public environment. This makes it more difficult to establish who belongs and who does not, depending on the spaces one uses with the public environment.

The stories within Bissoondath's collection, as analyzed through the lense of space, demonstrate how postcolonial values are reinscribed through the new communities and how the characters experience their environments, as alienating. This alienation can be felt both at "home" in the environment of one's origins, such as how Hari feels with the shifting social identification s of the island, or "away" such as how Miss Sheila does not recognize her own culture while abroad due to the changes imposed by the host environment through the Carifestas, as well as how her siblings had to change in an attempt to belong in Canada.

Brand and the Spaces of Nostalgia

In *"*Train to Montreal", from Brand's short story collection *Sans Souci,* the narrator is discomfited by the fact that she is the sole black person on the train to Montreal: "She looked quickly along noticing only what was there, only what concerned her. Oh God, she thought, she had not noticed a single Black face to sit with" (19). The narrator's discomfort at not being able to find another Black person to sit with demonstrates the importance of making links or associations within the public space through race. Unfortunately, the public environment of the train, which she uses as a means of mobility, is one in which the cultural diversity is lacking and skewed in favour of those currently occupying this space - White men. This character is attempting to reinstate the familiar with the public environment she moves through in order to

feel as though she belongs and is not an outsider. However, the cultural or racialized ground rules and everyday practices of the new space may be such that a transference or reinstatement of the comfort of the familiar is impossible, or at least very difficult. This demonstrates how certain social groups become marginalized. The narrator goes on to state: “She anticipated all the other seats, except the one beside her, filling up; the furtive eyes at her, their longing for her removal, then someone without a choice sitting next to her. “Christ!”” (19). She is unable to make herself feel as though she belongs because of her marginalized status. She feels insecure in this environment because she is, evidently, othered, because of the colour of her skin marking her out as different. The “ground rules” are already in place and force her to feel marginalized. I return to the concept of non-places as described by Augé, who states that:

> A person entering the space of non-place is relieved of his usual determinants. He becomes no more than what he does or experiences in the role of passenger, customer or driver. Perhaps he is still weighed down by previous day’s worries, the next day's concerns; but he is distanced from them temporarily by the environment of the moment. Subjected to a gentle form of possession, to which he surrenders himself with more or less talent or convisiton, he tastes for a while - like anyone who is possessed - the passive joys of identity-loss, and the more active pleasure of role-playing” (103).

Unfortunately for the Black woman character on the train, her racialized body is made conspicuous by the fact there are no others like her. Her identity is reduced to her skin colour, her gender, therefore rendering her as “Other”, as different. There is no protection of anonymity for her.

By contrast, before being subject to this discomfort, the narrator feels a certain level of cultural belonging when attending a jazz concert. However, this feeling is brief because she is soon left bereft, with an overwhelming sense of loss upon exiting the venue; she cannot stay

connected to that space once the event is over: “Jazz concerts always threw her into a pit of a mood. After, she would come out, a wry smile jerking the muscles on her face, as if some accustomed tragedy had occurred. It had been replayed; an escape had been rehearsed and outside nothing had changed. She would emerge looking at the city, shouting sometimes aloud” (Brand 17). Her difficulty with her sense of belonging within the city is mirrored when she speaks with a white man on the train; “She was regretting talking to him. He was so comfortable with himself. ... She hated him already. She realized that she had hated him, even before he came onto the train. At the corner of her eye, she noticed his face, like a child’s with its conceit, its petulance. She envied him, suddenly” (Brand 21). Her experience as a passenger is one of discomfort that seems to be based on a lack of connection, of belonging, caused by their obvious racial and gendered differences. This reinforces the fact that she inhabits, even as a passenger, a marginalized space, while he occupies a hegemonic space. There is a distance or chasm she is unable to cross due to a difference in race and origins since she is Black (and presumably from “away”) and he is White (and presumably a “native born” Canadian). It is assumed that because of the social and cultural history of Canada, a land of immigrants, those who are not white are considered to be from “elsewhere”, and are therefore “othered” or marginalized on this basis.

> He had a calmness in his body, as if he counted on being in the world forever. He was right, she supposed. Looking at him made her feel temporary, volatile. These people, she thought, they have more patience than I. She was always afraid of bursting, a thin flame, burnt out, quickly. In his look of firmness and belonging, she understood that she owned nothing. There would always be a sadness with her; a desire to have it destroyed (22).

She is jealous of the fact that he feels (she presumes) as though he belongs to the city and does not seem to question his belonging, whereas she does not feel as though she can own her own space within the city:

> It was freezing in the train. The smell of stale cigarettes and damp clothing enveloped the carriage. The wheels of the train ground on the brittle rails. Silence again. They were both uneasy with each other. He, convinced that she was wrong; she, finding him so settled in the comfort of his skin - his camouflage here, in the train, and in the city. It saved him the effort of decisions. He hid in it. She wanted to agree with him, but she could not. It would not be the same thing that they were agreeing to (23).

She makes presumptions based on these same socio-cultural discourses that marginalize her in the first place, assuming that he is comfortable in this space and that he does not even need to feel as though he belongs because it is a default position for him. The fact that this is her automatic response must mean that the spaces she frequents leave her with a sense of unbelonging:

> She tried to settle herself into her seat with the same uneasy feeling that she had when she boarded the train in Toronto. She closed her eyes, trying to sleep, wishing that she had gone to the washroom while the Irish hippie was still there. She would have felt safer going and coming back to her seat. Right now, she did not know if she could find her way back. His was the only face that she had memorized (23).

Her lack of security stems from the fact that she cannot associate with anyone on the train because no one else is Black. These non-Blacks become unimportant other than the fact that they represent otherness and place her in a marginalized position. “She walked, not looking but feeling the eyes of strangers turning toward her. She disturbed the little vignettes of white people sleeping or reading in their seats. Faces turned quickly toward her and away” (Brand,

24). She feels as though the train is unsafe because she is surrounded by strangers, by white people. However, she considers the bathroom on the train as safe because she is alone there. The space of the train is claustrophobic in its lack of diversity. Whereas she views the winter outside as safe, since the city pretends to offer her safety through the illusion of anonymity. However, she chooses, while walking on the streets, who to pay attention to, who to use as a point of reference, because the city is cosmopolitan. Therefore, being the only Black person on the train makes her feel as though she is in a space to which she does not belong and so her confidence is gone. Oddly this happens only after her conversation with the Irish hippy, possibly because his confidence is not affected by his surroundings and she is unnerved; it makes her realize that she does not feel the same confidence. Unfortunately, as she gets off of the train there are some drunk white men who harass her and call her a "nigger whore" repeatedly. Then,

> She placed herself among the others, climbing the escalator. They were silent. She, trying to hide, to be invisible, turning her head to see where he was, wondering how to move herself, her head, without being noticed. Her ears ringing as if slapped, she saw the crowd, some smiling at the obscene cough, others looking straight ahead. She turned away ... Then as she neared the top, she looked back at the endless stair… She looked back to say something, but only said it in looking. Apologising to her past self for not striking him or cursing back, for not hurting, wounding all of them standing on the escalator (27)

The discourses of the city pretend to offer her some protection through the anonymity of (Augé's) non-places and through the purportedly accepted multicultural difference. Unfortunately, no one defends her or helps her. The crowd, which is supposed to offer her the protection of anonymity, is complicit in her subjugation, her sense of unbelonging and her marginalization through its inaction at the racist slurs. However, even after the moment is over

and the crowd has changed, there are instances and spaces which make her feel othered and lesser than - i.e., marginalized; “She turned back again. They had all melted into the general crowd at the station. She scanned the crowd, wondering if they remembered now, greeting their friends. They looked safe, as clothed in their friendships as the man who got off at Kingston. He had forgotten their conversation and gone back to his life. They had forgotten her humiliation” (28). She has limited “access” to certain public spaces as a person who would be able to feel as though they belong; on the train, where she was the only Black person, as well as to the train station, where she is harassed. However, as soon as she is able to move through the wider and more public environment of the city, her anonymity affords her some type of release from this stressful situation, even if “her humiliation” will follow her. Unfortunately, it is the memory of her otherness that will follow her and affect her future navigations of spaces.

Nostalgia is a common experience for the migrant subject. Sara Ahmed describes how the consciousness plays an important role in feelings of belonging or unbelonging through memory:

> The experience of leaving home in migration is hence always about the failure of memory to fully make sense of the place one comes to inhabit, a failure which is experienced in the discomfort of inhabiting a migrant body, a body which feels out of place, which feels uncomfortable in this place. The process of returning home is likewise about the failures of memory, of not being inhabited in the same way by that which appears as familiar (343).

This feeling can occur for many reasons, including those feelings of unbelonging within new spaces. Nostalgia as a concept is important to identify because it helps the reader place the subjects within space. As Ashok Mohapatra specifies in his review of Dennis Walder’s article “Postcolonial Nostalgias: Writing, Representation, and Memory,” it is not

> until the mid-twentieth century, [that] colonialism continued to bring about physical and cultural displacements as well as relocations of not only the natives but also the colonial settlers in many parts of the world. As such, displacement remained the underlying cause of nostalgia. However, in the wake of the large-scale dislocations caused by global postcolonial modernity, this phenomenon became ubiquitous and more accentuated in the dispersed spatialities, in terms of the intersection and conflict of the temporalities of memory and history (1).

The displacement that induces nostalgia is therefore a reflection of the effects of colonialism. Through a close analysis of these moments of displacement and hence of nostalgia through the spaces and places in the texts, one can "understand not only the ethical importance of the representations of uncertainties and aporias that the fixed chronotopes of nostalgia tend to elide, but also begin to feel that the new dynamics of the past and the future operating in the present help us to think beyond the hyphenated bind of postcolonial migrants stuck in the liminal space between intangible homes" (Mohapatra 3-4). It is not just discourses that oppress, as when the drunk man swears at Brand's protagonist. The sense of oppression is also very much about practices, body language and the perception of it, such as when she felt alone on the train because there was no one else "like her."

An example demonstrating the importance of nostalgia for one of the characters can be found in Brand's short story "No Rinsed Blue Sky, No Red Flower Fences," where the narrator states:

> The city was claustrophobic. She felt land-locked. Particularly on humid days in the summer. She wanted to rush to the beach. But not the lake. It lay stagnant and saltless at the bottom of the city. She needed a piece of water which led out, the vast ocean, salty and burning on the eyes. The feel of the salt, blue and moving water, rushing past her ears and jostling her body, cleaning it, coming up a different person

each time as she dove through a curling wave. Not knowing how it would turn out.

A feeling of touching something quite big (87).

This character clearly, upon being reminded of the ocean back home, is left without an acceptable or familiar recourse. Where once she would have enjoyed the comfort and release of the ocean, she is now only left with a lake as an alternative and finds it lacking in comparison. She therefore feels "landlocked," a metaphor that connotes enclosure, constriction or imprisonment. Bhabha, in his article "Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition" states that:

> The discursive conditions of this psychic image of identification will be clarified if we think of the perilous perspective of the concept of the image of itself. For the image – as point of identification – marks the site of an ambivalence. Its representation is always spatially split – it makes present something that is absent – and temporally deferred – it is the representation of a time that is always elsewhere, a repetition. The image is only ever an appurtenance to authority and identity; it must never be read mimetically as the 'appearance' of a 'reality'. The access to the image of identity is only ever possible in the negative of any sense of originality or plenitude, through the principle of displacement and differentiation (absence/presence; representation/repetition) that always renders it a liminal reality (118).

This character's comparison of the spaces in Canada, where she currently lives, in a negative light, versus the spaces of her home of origins renders her unable to belong because she does not want to. In this case, she creates her own sense of unbelonging and hence continues to live in this "liminal" reality.

It is within these margins that the characters attempt to navigate the public spaces. They, as immigrants, must learn to navigate new environments with new (to them) ground rules that

are already present, which are also not constructed for them. However, they must also move through the use of these new margins in which they are placed by the already present discourses of the majority. This exacerbates the possible nostalgia the characters may feel in regards to the spaces they must navigate in conjunction with their places of origin because they lack the feelings of familiarity and belonging that stemmed from their environments of origin.

Clarke and the Outside Spaces

In many of Clarke's short stories from *In This City*, glimpses into the living spaces of characters are as prevalent as representations of the surrounding streets and public environments. Clarke often portrays his characters as being inside and looking out, or as being outside looking in. They are often excluded on the basis that they are "Other" and are portrayed as though they do not belong, even within the multicultural or ethnic environments that they have carved out for themselves. They may also not truly inhabit the living spaces within which they attempt to escape the discourses of the city at large, as they are constantly judged because they are considered other. This is apparent in Clarke's short story "Initiation" where the main character, who is also the retrospective narrator, wishes to become a member of the group he visits in the apartment on Jane and Finch[4] with one of his students. However, he only wishes this while he is in the apartment; once he has left he wants to return to the life he is used to. The mention of the apartment's location is also relevant because of the racialized connotations of the neighbourhood. Throughout the story, the narrator notices the outside environment of the city affects how he views the inside of the apartment and what is happening there. As Cornel Bogle states:

[4] Jane-Finch is a community north of Toronto. The area is named after the intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue. Jane-Finch is internationally known for its ethnically diverse population, crime rate and poverty. The community's socio-economic status is attributed to inadequate urban planning and social infrastructure. Today, residents continue to fight hard to improve life in the community. http://www.jane-finch.com/about.htm
See Annex for visual

> Many of the assumptions made by the narrator in "Initiation" are informed by the space in which he finds himself. He repeats the phrase "in this section of the city" (25), suggesting that the space he has entered is marked by certain histories and narratives. Indeed, the Jane and Finch neighbourhood is known as a predominantly black community, marked by and publicly perceived as a space rife with criminal activities and low-income households (par. 16).

Throughout the story, the narrator notices how the environment of the city affects how he views the inside of the apartment and what is happening there. This begins when he goes to enter the apartment and they hear the door being unlocked; "Five anxieties [to represent the five "Clicks!" of the five locks unlocking] that meant, in this section of the city, protection and safety and secrecy for whatever was going on, "was going down" behind the red-painted glossy door, was not to be exposed to any and every vision, and certainly not to the man" (25). As the protagonist enters the room, is introduced and vouched for by the person that invited him in, his student Barrington, it is automatically mentioned that he is West Indian; "The brother's a Carbean man" (28). This is immediately pointed out to the "brothers" in the room as he is introduced and this automatically marks him as not belonging to the group because his origins differ from theirs. His difference as a Caribbean Black man is also reflected further in the story where the "brothers" automatically assume he speaks Spanish (30), which he does not. This further demonstrates how there is a misunderstanding between the differing individuals based on their origins and how they are stereotyped or perceived by others.

The narrator is quick to reflect how the music he hears in the apartment is from John Coltrane and acts as "a synopsis of all I had been exposed to outside on the street in this section of the city, Jane and Finch; and a summary of what was going on in this room. A synopsis of the smell, the hope, the fear, the joy, the liquor I had drunk, and the women, and the power of the city itself" (26). The music is one that is often described throughout the story as

"screaming." It is used as a tool to portray the plight of the revolution[5]. Throughout the rest of the story, the effect of the music on the characters is heavily portrayed and often makes them stop what they are doing in order to reflect upon it, almost as though in spiritual contemplation as there are several allusions to the atmosphere in the apartment as being similar to that of a church. The music is a big influencing factor for how the characters build the essence of the room; however, the outside, the city, heavily frames the room and affects the narrator's perception of the room itself, and the context for those who occupy it.

The narrator also often shifts his perception of his position and of the others within the room whenever outside forces "enter" the room and disrupt the narrative that is being built by the individuals within it. The outside creates a shift in the narrator's perception of those occupying the room. However, he is also constantly comparing the neighborhood around Jane and Finch with that of Harlem. He is constantly bringing back memories that he associates with his visit to Harlem to this neighbourhood and specifically to this apartment and those who live there because he recognizes their similarities. The outside forces affect his perception of the events inside the room:

> It [the "cigarette"] was thicker than any I had seen for the past few months, hand-rolled by the old men in the streets of Harlem, who sat on wooden benches under the canopies of old, almost derelict stores, or on the park benches which seemed to be placed everywhere, every three steps that an old man could take, in the hot, never-ending New York humidity … The haze from the candles and the incense and the thing we were smoking made us all soft in the room: and made the room smaller than it was; and clothed us in a peace which took away the dilapidation, the

[5] By the late 1960s as the post-bebop era emerged, John Coltrane had gained status as the cultural saint of the Black Arts movement. A strong supporter of the civil rights movement, Coltrane's song *Alabama*, written in response to the 1963 Birmingham church bombing that killed four little girls, symbolized the fusing of his musical, political and cultural consciousness and stood as a model for the emerging black power/ black consciousness movement of the period. https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/coltrane-john-william-1926-1968/#:~:text=A%20strong%20supporter%20of%20the,power%2F%20black%20consciousness%20movement%20of

> noise, the fatigue I was feeling, the anger and the loneliness I had seen and had felt on the faces of the people below in the street (30-1).

The unnamed protagonist's reaction to the way the space of the apartment is identified by those who occupy it clearly marks him as an outsider. Furthermore, the character only chooses to view his interactions between the others as unproblematic because he does want to belong, even if the values found within the apartment do not belong to him. He says :

> Nothing else in the room seemed to exist. There was nothing else. This room was nowhere. And still, it was in the city. But it could be anywhere. It was wholesome nevertheless because what was being done, could be done. And it was ugly because of what was being done, in my presence. And I was the witness. But I no longer wanted to be a witness. I had been placed on this threshold since I came to Jane and Finch, and I wanted no longer to be left out. But I knew I could not be a part of this Toronto. This room was Toronto: good and bad. And in the way we were being defined (32-3).

Although the narrator is aware of his position on the threshold he still attempts to find some type of common ground in which he could make his own space within this environment. He "moved round the walls, as if I was in an art gallery … as if the room was in a library" (37). He attempts to position himself by finding ways in which he might belong and as he discovers that all of the books "dealt with black people, with coloured people, with men of colour, with niggers, with Afro-Americans, with Negroes, and with African Americans and black Canadians" (37). He realizes that he does not know all of the titles, however, he stops at *Othello* and *The Tempest* and at the discovery of the only white author he feels that "The discovery of the error made the world explode with the gratification of finding that your lover is a liar" (38). This is also a hint about the fact that he is a Black professor who grew up within a postcolonial environment where his own education was heavily influenced by the white hegemonic past;

Shakespeare would have been one of the authors he would have had to study and although he was a professor of Black Literature at York University he would still have been heavily influenced by the colonial past both through the institution of the university and through his own upbringing. Not only are (almost) all of the books by Black authors but everything that is related to the arts that is mentioned or hinted at is created by Black artists. The music is described as being by John Coltrane and James Brown. There is also a poem, Black Art, by Amiri Baraka[6] that is quoted. Lines from Malcolm X[7] are also present. The narrator, through this discovery in the apartment realizes that he "wished he knew more about black American music and about black Canadian style. And I wanted to do something about it the moment I escaped from this blue-hazed, turning room, the moment I escaped from this Toronto version of Harlem, back into my condominium in Rosedale Valley Road[8]" (38). The fact that he wants to escape the space that he is in to learn more about it from the comfort of his own home demonstrates that as much as he states he wants to belong to that Toronto, to that room and to those "brothers," he cannot actually do so without leaving his own past and comfort behind him. He also cannot show his own ignorance about Black culture to the group if he wants to belong; especially if he wants to keep his credibility as an educated Black man and not solely be recognized as a "Carbean man;" and therefore, a "different" Black man. Barrington's "racial credibility" (41) as well as the narrator's would be called into question, further removing them from belonging within the group.

The racial credibility within the story is also demarcated by the way the men dress. The main character wants to be a "brother", but the camouflage outfit that he wears for the occasion does not make him a member of the group, even though by wearing it he is attempting to blend in. As he points out, what they all had in common was "their image" as revolutionaries (34).

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[6] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Art_(poem)
[7] https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/malcolm-x/1965/01/afro-amer.html
[8] Rosedale is an affluent neighbourhood in Toronto
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosedale,_Toronto

He recognizes, however, that he cannot be a member of the group because his identity is the cultural product of a different place; he cannot ground himself in this place, as nothing is familiar to him which could mark him as part of the group. Because of this, he is further excluded from this community with which he has no possibility of effectively identifying. As stated by Bhabha: "The question of identification is never the affirmation of a pre-given identity, never a self-fulfilling prophecy – it is always the production of an 'image' of identity and the transformation of the subject in assuming that image. The demand of identification – that is, to be for an Other – entails the representation of the subject in the differentiating order of Otherness" (117). The protagonist does not recognize himself as part of the group, he does not "assume" it because he is aware of his difference. "I began to feel as if I was a black man deep in Harlem in America, and was no longer West Indian, as they had painted me at the door by their introduction. I was beginning to feel like a brother. And I must have become one, for just as I accepted this image of myself, I began to see what was happening around me" (33). This character unknowingly or unwittingly reinscribes a specific identity onto those within the apartment by attempting to appropriate their identity in order to belong. The narrator so firmly believes that his vision of these individuals is correct based on their neighbourhood's reputation that he even becomes uncomfortable and thinks about how he would read the newspaper and see photographs of the homes where raids occurred and that "It could have been this room" (35). In an attempt to belong he does this the only way he knows, with information that he gained through the media in regards to this type of neighbourhood and about these types of people. This effectively marginalizes the individuals within the room and others them.

The narrator is also aware that his likeness is manufactured by the outfit he is wearing in order to belong: "I knew I was conspicuous among these men. I knew I stood out, in my army outfit which was nothing more to me than a summer costume; a costume like their own

costume which was manufactured to make them look more African and tie them into an international black brotherhood" (34).

As the story progresses and the narrator leaves the apartment with Barrginton, we learn that their outfits were extremely effective, as they had a great night of partying. Also, the disparity between the groups is much larger than initially demonstrated, as Barrington says: "You remember all that shit about the highest literacy rate in the world, and how it doesn't' surprise you that I'm at York, and my old aunt got into that elitist shit, segregating me from the brothers in Jane-Finch and on the street?" (46). Moreover, it would seem as though the same people living in the apartment on Jane and Finch also use costume in order to attempt to appropriate, or reappropriate their Blackness from a perspective that is not tainted by postcolonial values, as we learn that the man in the apartment with whom they dealt changed his name to sound more "Black" (43) in order to belong, on Jane and Finch.

Furthermore, as the protagonist and his student drive away from the Jane and Finch neighborhood, we learn that the streets they take are more and more affluent: Bloor and Shelbourne[9], Spadina Avenue[10], Forest Hill Village[11]:

> And then we were in Forest Hill Village. Barrington stopped the old Mustang, now running like a charm now that we were inside this bar, and which had nine circles drawn in its hanging advertisement; and I went back to the car, parked like the others, in one line, and took my overnight bag, with which I had travelled to New York and stayed for three months…[he went to the bathroom to change] and observing my change of dress … Where's the camouflage army outfit? [Barrington asked of him] (53).

[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherbourne_Street,_Toronto
[10] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spadina_Avenue
[11] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forest_Hill,_Toronto

The narrator shed his costume. He was no longer in the apartment or in a neighbourhood where such a costume of army fatigues would garner him any kind of credibility, quite the opposite. Now that he is playing to the spaces and discourses of the more affluent neighbourhood he finds himself in, he is no longer a "brother" as he is no longer in the room where that identity found its context. As Bogle emphasizes:

> When the professor remarks that "Now when we get back to York . . ." [53; ellipsis in the original], which ends the story, he reveals how entrance into the outside world has shifted the relationship between the two men. The transgression of boundaries of masculinity evident in the room no longer carries weight in the outside world. The relations and hierarchies are restored at the end, and in shedding the camouflage outfit the professor puts on another mask, and the stifled, restrictive ways in which men cope with the outside world and how they interact with other men are brought into the light (par 19).

The apartment, therefore, is not only a space but is a place of resistance. Once the professor has decided the "context of the room, and the place" (33), it becomes evident that he will remain an outsider because of the spaces and places he comes from. His origin forces the "brothers" to interpret his identity in such a way that they consider him an outsider, an other. According to Gupta and Ferguson**:** "The distinctiveness of societies, nations, and cultures is based upon a seemingly unproblematic division of space, on the fact they occupy "naturally" discontinuous spaces" (6). However, these divisions are far from 'unproblematic' for the migrant character in "Initiation", given how the story's characterizations of racially ghettoized space and place highlights the importance of one's associations to space and place in order to be considered a part of distinct groups, or to feel as though they may belong. Furthermore, the character only chooses to view his interactions between the others as unproblematic because he does want to belong, even if the values found within the apartment do not belong to him.

* * *

The pre-established exclusionary power structures found within the spaces of the city, through the differing political, and social discourses, etc. affect the migrant characters and situate them in sites of unbelonging. They reinforce the separation between "us" vs "them," essentially creating their "Otherness" and it becomes evident for those migrants that they are forced to navigate within the margins of society. As Domenic Beneventi states: "nationalist mappings of Canadian landscape are an attempt at "evacuating" the racial Other from the collective body of the nation. The orientalizing gaze not only defines and "fixes" foreign bodies within the confines of the ethnic ghetto, but excludes them from the more privileged sites of the city identified with the dominant white middle class" (136). These public spaces and non-places essentially inscribe certain ways of being navigated which allow some individuals to feel as though they belong while also restricting the types of movements of other individuals so that they do not feel that same sense of belonging. As Bogle states:

> The experience of inhabiting space is not only concerned with how these spaces are produced and transformed by individuals but also shares an interest in how collectively produced spatiality has transformed the subjects themselves in ways not immediately resonant with the social realities that prefigured them (par.5).

It is not solely the physical spaces of the public environment, but it is in combination with the discourses of all who use those spaces, that the production of identities are created and reinscribed. Unfortunately for those migrant subjects, it is those of the dominant society that set the ground rules. The sense of unbelonging felt by these characters further exacerbates their "Otherness", which in turn adds to their nostalgia, or need to remain connected with their "homes" of origin.

Chapter 2: Place and Individuality

> The Door of No Return is of course no place at all but a metaphor for place. Ironically, or perhaps suitably, it is no one place but a collection of places. ... A place where a certain set of transactions occurred, perhaps the most important of them being the transference of selves. The Door of No Return — real and metaphoric as some places are, mythic to those of us scattered in the Americas today. To have one's belonging lodged in a metaphor is voluptuous intrigue; to inhabit a trope; to be a kind of fiction. To live in the Black Diaspora is I think to live as a fiction — a creation of empires, and also self-creation. It is to be a being living inside and outside of herself. It is to apprehend the sign one makes yet to be unable to escape it except in radiant moments of ordinariness made like art. To be a fiction in search of its most resonant metaphor then is even more intriguing. So I am scouring maps of all kinds, the way that some fictions do, discursively, elliptically, trying to locate their own transferred selves (A Map to the Door of No Return, Brand 18-9).

In the first section of *A Map to the Door of No Return*, titled "A Circumstantial Account of a State of Things," the reader is introduced to the main recurring question or theme which Brand explores throughout the book, the painful realization of the fragile emotional state of the narrator as she moves from being a young girl attempting to uncover her family history and where it began. During her adolescence she discovers, much to her disappointment and that of her grandfather, that their sense of belonging and of identity is built upon foundations whose roots have been lost or forgotten. This estrangement, as Brand eloquently states, "was a rupture in history, a rupture in the quality of being. It was also a physical rupture, a rupture of geography ... We were not from the place where we lived and we could not remember where we were from or who we were ... Having no name to call on was having no past; having no past pointed to the fissure between the past and the present" (5). As I discussed in Chapter 1, the importance of understanding one's origins sets the basis and tone for the interpretation of one's current state of affairs. Brand's lack of genealogical history connotes a lack in her identity due to the fact that information in regards to her origins has been lost to her and her family. This affects how she attempts to find herself. Although identity is not solely reliant on one's "roots," the lack of an "origin" or starting point of Brand's family's ethno-linguistic and cultural roots,

means she must rely on outside experiences in order to construct these parts of her identity. In *A Map to the Door of No Return*, Brand chose to create herself regardless of the "gap" in her own origins story created by the erasure of individual histories through the slave trade. One of the ways that Brand explores and works through her youthful self's sense of loss, of anxiety about being cut off from her roots, is through her highly personal representations of place. This process, however, is not unique to Brand. Accordingly, this chapter attempts to analyze the representations of place in my corpus of Caribbean Canadian short stories. To reiterate from the introduction, place, in this project, refers to the environment associated with an emotional relationship, whether of love or hate, fear or courage, where one may consider themselves as belonging or not, etc., where recognitions and identifications of self and of others are grounded through physical, discursive, social, and symbolic markers.

Chapter 2 focuses on the more personal nature of the literary representations of place found within this selection of Caribbean Canadian short stories. This is not to say that the concept of "space" covered in Chapter 1 did not discuss how the characters reacted emotionally. The difference is rather on the reflection of self. Space, in this thesis, focuses on how various discourses within the public environments affect the character, whereas the notion of place focuses on how the characters reflect their emotions in their own environments. Thus according to my usage here, place works from the inside. For instance, Brand's sense of the "rupture in the quality" of being points to important affective and material differences *and* interactions between the personal, private self, and the places within which their characters interpret themselves. I argue that certain places have positive associations for the characters to the point where they are represented nostalgically. However, where a sense of loss or disjunction regarding one's origins is present, the characters experience a more negative sense of place, especially in regards to the migrant subjects' experiences of Canadian spaces and places as alienating. Furthermore, places of origin that tend to be represented negatively are also

reinscribed vis-à-vis negative experiences of place in Canada. It is for this reason that one's associations with place are so important in the creation of identity, not only because they allow a restructuring of the boundaries associated with the identity formed in the place of origin but because they also enable the reinscription of identity in the land or host country.

Bissoondath and the Shifting Places

In the short story "Insecurity" by Bissoondath, the protagonist experiences an agonizing moment when he realizes that the life he had been living on his unnamed home island was not quite the same as he had perceived it to be. He felt "very insecure in this place" (67) because the "present, with its confusion and corruption, eluded him" (68). There had been riots and demonstrations from the "Black Power" movement that had caused changes in the governing regime, affecting his status within the community because of his South Asian descent. He, Alistair Ramgoolam, takes a step back to analyze his situation from "change so cataclysmic that the only issue would be rapid flight. And failing that, poverty, at best" (69). He views it from a completely different angle once he realizes he has been living in a constant state of in-betweenness, of flux, of to-ing and fro-ing between his family's past in India and the future he envisioned for himself and his family in Canada: "he suddenly understood how far his son had gone. Just as his father had grown distant from India; just as he himself had grown even further from the life that, in memory, his father had represented and then, later in life, from that which he himself had known on the island, so too had his eldest son gone beyond" (75). He had believed, he realizes, but without having been truly conscious of it, that he had lived and viewed his life on the island as only a stop-over until something better would be attained. Mr. Ramgoolam believed a better life awaited him after his eventual emigration to Canada because he had been sending money over to a Canadian bank account in order to "protect" himself in case he needed to flee the island. He had sent his son to live and study in Toronto, had been

sending him money to pay for his living expenses, and accumulated savings in a Canadian bank account in preparation for his own, eventual, emigration. While this example does not fully demonstrate how Mr. Ramgoolam feels, within the private place of the home in Toronto that he now owns through his son, he realizes that a future there is unattainable to him: "The wooden floor seemed to dance beneath him and, for a moment, he had a sense of slippage, of life turned to running liquid. He saw his son sitting in the living room of the Toronto house - sitting, smiling, in a room Mr. Ramgoolam knew to be there, but the hardened outlines of which he could not distinguish" (75). This image does capture his feelings of being left out because the notion of the house he owns but does not inhabit, is; "something softer, hazier, less graspable" (75). He feels he is being left behind as his son carves a way for himself in a completely foreign environment that he can only visualize: " He now saw himself as being left behind, caught between the shades of his father and unexpectedly, of his son" (75). Mr. Ramgoolam can barely imagine what it would be like to live in Toronto, and he realizes that his previous idea of living with his son in a Toronto house that he had created for himself is not in actuality his home. The fact that he is not living with his son, and that the life that he had imagined for himself in Toronto has not been actualized, does not exist as he had envisioned, leaves him deeply affected. This is a scenario familiar to Mr. Ramgoolam, that seems to be repeating, as his father had also emigrated from India to the Caribbean. His son may have settled down in Toronto, as evidenced by his purchase of a house, but it leaves the narrator feeling stuck in between places, without anything to truly ground him anymore: "And he knew that his insecurity, until then always in the land around him, in the details of life daily lived, was now within him. It was as if his legs had suddenly gone hollow, two shells of utter fragility" (75). Mr. Ramgoolam is clearly having difficulty negotiating a new identity based on these places because everything he used to be able to count on to define himself has become hazy. The distance between his past, present and future through his father, himself and his son means that the foundation of his

ideal home, as represented in the quotation "hardened outlines of the room cannot be distinguished," can no longer act as the means to support and define him. Through this realization, his insecurity has transferred from the land around him, which used to be stable, to his being. He has internalized the reality of his situation. The changes within his home environment through the shifting social powers have affected his identity and social status; his sense of self as connected to his home has been ruptured:

> Alistair Ramgoolam was a self-made man who thought back with pride to his poor childhood. He credited his poverty with preventing in him the aloofness he often detected in his friends: a detachment from the island, a sneering view of its history. He had, he felt, a fine grasp on the island, on its history and its politics, its people and its culture. He had developed a set of "views" and anecdotes which he used to liven up parties. It distressed him that his views and anecdotes rarely had the desired effect, arousing instead only a deadpan sarcasm. ... His life at the fringe of events, he felt, had given him a certain authority over and comprehension of the past. But the present, with its confusion and corruption, eluded him. The sense of drift nurtured unease in Mr. Ramgoolam" (67-68).

There is a sense of flux, or instability, in the process of his new identity creation because Mr Rangoolam is both stuck over "there" (in India) and over "here" (in the Caribbean) while wanting to move to a completely new location (Canada), which he cannot even grasp. His "place," his private need for a "home," within the world has shifted and therefore caused a change in his identity as he no longer has anything "concrete" to grasp in order to ground himself in his current environment. The quote by Douglas found in the first chapter, in regards to homespace, is also relevant here. She alluded that the definition of a home is the "organization of space over time" (294). Mr. Ramgoolam is not creating a home for himself in Toronto as he is not spending time there. It is an imagined place which he has not visited. He

cannot consider it a home as he has not been able to make it so by investing his time there. He has also been limiting his creation of a home in his current place on the island because he has been living in a liminal reality, stuck between the wishes of his own father in India and those of his son in Toronto. Unfortunately, the changed political climate on the island has also made his current home an unwelcoming environment, affecting his very sense of self and further exacerbating his shift in identity. He no longer feels welcome, or at home, anywhere. The changes from the environment around him were the catalysts for his realization of his liminal reality. His "home" had never truly been as he had been imagining his life in the Caribbean as a stop-over for something more. Unfortunately, his son will be the one to benefit from the fruits of his labour as he will be able to settle in Canada while Mr. Ramgoolam sees his ideals for a better life slip away with his changes of building a home for himself elsewhere. It is this shift, this flux in his reality that forces him to confront his situation and realize that he does not belong in his own home, nor to that of his father and of his son.

Brand and the Disconnected Places

Brand's short story "No Rinsed Blue sky, No Red Flower Fences" provides some insight into the consciousness of a trans-american outcast who lives an isolated life, away from family and friends, with no hope of a change in situation after six years of being in Canada. In this short story the main character, a woman from yet another unnamed island in the Caribbean - the only hint of her potential origins being a mention of Point Fortin[12] by the sea, which could mean she comes from Trinidad -- works illegally as a nanny for a white family. She lives in poverty and sends money back home to her family in order to support her children. She also moves from one apartment to the next in an attempt to hide from debt collectors. Concerning

[12] Point Fortin, officially the Republic Borough of Point Fortin, the smallest Borough in Trinidad and Tobago, is located in southwestern Trinidad (Wikipedia)

this well-known situation, McKittrick states: “Black women, men, and children have been, forcefully and not, implicated in the uneven development of space because overarching traditional geographic projects require that they be placed and displaced” (12). The character’s feelings about her current situation are reflected in her surroundings, her “home” :

> The apartment had tried to kill her again. She painted the walls as fast as she felt threatened. The city, she had been all through it in her searching, was dotted with bachelor apartments which she could not afford and hated anyway. As she moved from one to the other, she painted the walls. First yellow, to be bright, and then white, to be alone. She told her friends that it was so that she could fill the rooms with her own self, so that she could breathe and put up her own paintings, her own landscapes on the walls. She had to live there but she didn’t have to lose all sense of beauty, with their tatty walls and nothing in them as if no one ever lived there (Brand 85).

It is worth noting that in feeling the need to fill the rooms “with her own self,” the protagonist decorates it with reminders of life back home on the island, such as her emphasis upon the “bright[ness]” of the “yellow” paint. However, she also knowingly skews her knowledge of what her home was really like in order to combat the negative emotions brought on by her current location or place: “A peacock rattan chair sat under the poster of home. A girl in a wet T-Shirt, the sea in back, the sun on her body, represented home. Home had never been like that, but she kept the poster. Its glamour shielded her from the cold outside and the dry hills back home at the same time (89).” She uses glamour in order to mask the truth of her own home, both in her apartment in Toronto and through remembered ideals of her “home” on the island. As Douglas explains, the home should be looked at as “as organization of space over time” (294).

Unfortunately, this character is constantly on the move and so unable to spend the required time in one environment in order to consider it home.

Since she is not grounding her identity in the truth, from either "here" or "over there" she is reimagining what it means to be from the Caribbean, therefore recreating her identity as a migrant character through her sense of nostalgia. The nostalgia she experiences for the island is directly correlated to the disdain she feels about the Canadian metropole, where she feels stuck and "land-locked" (87). This character's constant need to be reminded of her home of origins through her choice of decorations in her apartment demonstrates how she is unable to fully live in her Canadian home. This liminal reality, as Bhabha states, ensures that she cannot belong because she is not where she longs to live - ensuring that she also is not truly living. Whether or not she would experience this same feeling of connectedness back home is irrelevant to her; the simple fact that it contrasts so radically with her current environment is enough to feed her bleak perspective of her home in Canada.

The protagonist's nostalgia can also be understood as directly related to her status as a poor immigrant worker, as a marginal member of society:

> When she had money the creaking [of the floorboards in the corridor outside her apartment] sounded homely, like living with family. But when she was flat broke and depressed, the sound of footsteps outside the door made her jumpy...inciting her face and head to sadness and then reproach for such weakness and then pity for her blackness and her woman's body, and hopelessness at how foolish she was in not even being able to pay the rent, or fix her teeth, which she dreamt nightly fell out in her hands, bloodless … The city could be so nasty when she had no money. Money was so important. If you had none, it made you feel as if you'd never done a thing in your life (86).

She contrasts her actual physical environment in Canada with that of her emotional one back home. She is constantly comparing, either explicitly or implicitly, the differences between her sense of self when she was back home and the ways in which the new place leaves her feeling. She is unable to disconnect the two in a satisfying or healthy way, and so they take on extreme importance for her mental well-being:

> The threat of being evicted hung over her head. She thought that when she walked in the street, people noticed. They must've. If there was anything that tipped them off, it was the sign she wore in her eyes. She kept them lowered, or at courageous times she stared until they removed their own eyes. On the bus, when she had the fare, she always stood, trying to appear thinner than she was, bent, staring out the window. She did not ask for apologies when people jostled her; she pretended that it did not happen. She did try sometimes. Sitting in two seats and ignoring people coming in, but by the time two or three stops had passed she would ring the bell, get off the bus, and walk quickly home… Returning home her imagination tightened the walls of the apartment, giving them a cavernous, gloomy look. She would lie on the floor and listen to the footsteps in the corridor outside. The phone would ring and startle her. The sound would blast around in her chest and she would pray for it to stop, never thinking to answer it (88).

Her mental state dramatizes her profound feeling of being out-of-place, as she is therefore, once again, implicitly comparing her alienated sense of place in Toronto to an implied better, or ideal, relationship to place back home. As is apparent in the previous quotation, she sees her identity reflected in the eyes of those she crosses in the streets. Whether their opinions are real or simply imagined by the protagonist because of her lack of communication with "others" from her apartment building, she still uses them to establish her sense of self and thereby create part of her identity. She even does this through her anonymous interactions in public spaces on

the streets, to the point where she even feels compelled to make herself smaller while on the bus so as not to be "seen." However, she also, at times, attempts to take up more space by trying to use two seats to assert herself; yet then feels ashamed of these actions and gets off the bus early. In trying either to hide or to assert herself, the protagonist shows that her sense of agency is dependent upon those with whom she shares public spaces; She also shows that her idea of the others' perception of her is profoundly dependent upon her sense of her status as a member of a visible minority within a place that is predominantly white. This character's paradoxical perspectives are consistent with Dixon and Durrheim's conclusion that a "general and inclusive definition of place-identity can be considered as "a 'pot-pourri' of memories, conceptions, interpretations, ideas and related feelings about specific physical settings as well as types of settings' (Prohansky in Durrheim, 1983, p. 60). As a distinctive substructure of the self, [Prohansky *et al*.] place-identity might function to underwrite personal identities, render actions or activities intelligible, express tastes and preferences and mediate efforts to change environments" (28). This take on place-identity speaks to the importance of the dialectic of experience, the way one inhabits, thinks about, and feels in regards to past and present places; it "underwrites" one's identity through continuous interactions and restructurations about a new place in terms of one's views on their place of origin, including a possible lingering nostalgia.

This short story by Brand provides several examples of the protagonist's constant focus on her immediate, immigrant environment, which does not ease her discomfort from being away from her "home": "The apartment had two rooms. She needed a place with two rooms. Each so that she could leave the other" (88). She constantly needs to be in a state of motion in order to feel as though she is escaping and moving forward in her life. This can be further emphasized by her need to be cleansed and made new by the flowing ocean, as stated in a previous quote. She also constantly changes apartments, not only to escape the debt collectors

but also because she cannot even remain still within her own apartment; she feels stuck and unable to move forward. This feeling pervades her home, the only place where she feels comfortable in her exclusion. She is constantly in a state of in-betweenness even though she frequently moves through the city, either by public transportation, walking, changing apartments or jobs. However, she is going nowhere because she is stuck "back home." Whenever she is in public, she mentions not interacting with others, as was seen with her reactions to taking the bus. However, walking down the street as a nanny with the children of the white family also affects her interactions, as expressed in the following: "She was always uncomfortable under the passing gazes, muttering to herself that she knew they didn't have to tell her that she was out of place here. But there was no other place to be right now. The little money fed her sometimes, fed her children back home, no matter the stark scene which she created on the corners of the street" (87). She clearly does not feel comfortable negotiating the public spaces which she cannot avoid. The mention of the streets and public environments is relevant here because she carries these feelings with her into her home, it permeates the walls of her apartments and that of her being.

The passing gazes of strangers affect the protagonist on a deeply personal level, even though these people are strangers. One of the reasons she may feel such discomfort on the street while holding the hand of a white child could be the neighborhood in which she works. If a white family is rich enough to hire a nanny, they must live in a more affluent neighborhood, which could mean that this neighborhood is a predominantly white neighborhood. She seems to have trouble looking people in the eye, perhaps because she sees herself reflected there and does not like what she sees: a poor stranger who does not belong, a sentiment echoed through the conversations over the phone with the debt collector: "One [creditor] had told her to go and sell her body if she had to and why were you people coming to this country, if you couldn't pay your bills, he had yelled into her ear. Her days then were heady. Each ring of the phone, each

footstep in the hall, each knock on the door threatened to blow everything to hell. Those days the white walls came alive, glaring at her, watching her as she slept fitfully" (91). She is not able to appropriate her own place because of the constant infringing reminders of the spaces that surround her and act upon her right as a free agent (ie. financial institutions, the immigration bureau, etc.). Therefore, she is constantly in a troubled flux as her unsuccessful attempts at adaptation (making herself smaller and bigger, etc) express. The interpretation of her surroundings affect her identity not solely in terms of gender and race but also in terms of socio-economic class: her mood and view of her home change according to her means. Based on her strong negative emotions, and especially given the debt which weighs heavily upon her, the gaze of the strangers in these public environments reminds her of her poverty vis-a-vis the child and their family, as well as of her lack of community or support system. This absence of help in her everyday tribulations affects her mood and her view of her environment, especially as the title suggests that she does not have her own "home" ("without a blue sky or fence with flowers"): "Rushing to the window she looked at the street below, empty of people, still dark. Not sea blue, no red flower fence and high sky" (93). There is an implied contrast with the kind of natural, beautiful, sense of "place" back home. Such moments of melancholic nostalgia mask or implicitly deny the negative aspects of life back home that have driven the protagonist to become, and suffer as, a nanny in Canada. The contrast established, the ensuing melancholia affects her "groundedness," her sense of place, her identity. Not only does she not have a "home" in Canada, but even the one she yearns for back on the island is no longer attainable; her view of it has changed through her nostalgic need to remain rooted somewhere where she remembers belonging.

In Brand's short story "Blossom, Priestess of Oya, Goddess of Winds, Storms, and Waterfalls," the reader is introduced to a protagonist who, unlike the character from the previously analyzed short story, attempts to control her own fate through her surroundings. She

takes control, and creates her own place where she feels safe and secure, and in so doing creates employment for herself and welcomes others to her home. Her home has become important because it offers her a means to take care of herself and take charge of her life while offering a safe haven for others who share similar life experiences as a result of their migrant status. At the beginning of the story, Blossom, the protagonist, works for a white family. However, rather than being a nanny, Blossom works as a cleaning lady. A wary character, Blossom is uneasy around the "boss-man": "Well now is five years since Blossom in Canada and nothing ain't breaking. She leave the people on Oriole for some others on Balmoral. The white man boss-man was a doctor. Since the day she reach, he eyeing she, eyeing she. Blossom just mark this down in she head and making sure she ain't in no room alone with he" (33). Rightfully so, as he attempts to rape her. "One of the many ways violence operates across gender, sexuality, and race," McKittrick argues,

> is through multiscalar discourses of ownership: having "things," owning lands, invading territories, possessing someone, are, in part, narratives of displacement that reward and value particular forms of conquest...this reward system repetitively returns us to the body, black subjecthood, and the where of blackness, not just as it is owned, but as black subjects participate in ownership. Black diasporic struggles can also be read, then, as geographic contests over discourses of ownership (3).

However, rather than remain quiet about the traumatic event of her boss' attempted rape, Blossom fights back, and she does this very publicly. This is how she attempts to take back her ownership, or her rights over her own body. She walks the street in front of her boss's house with signs calling him a rapist:

> The next day Blossom show up on Balmoral with a placard saying the Dr. So-and-So was a white rapist; and Peg and Betty bring a Black Power flag, and the three of

> them parade in front of that man house whole day … Not a soul ain't come outside, but you never see so much drapes and curtain moving and swaying up and down Balmoral. Police come again, but they tell Doctor So-and-So that the sidewalk is public property and as long as Blossom and them keep moving they wasn't committing no crime… The next day Blossom hear from the Guyanese girl working next door that the whole family on Balmoral, Doctor, wife, children, cat, and dog, gone to Florida (34).

Even though she uses the public space around her in order to shed light on a very private situation that occurred within this man's home, it becomes clear that the private places of the neighbours have had a great impact on this man and his family as the neighbours' "peeping" into his own life, the events unfolding before his home, affect how he would feel within his home and community. For when Blossom notices the "drapes and curtains [of the neighbours] moving and swaying", she understands how her actions have had a direct impact on how "the boss-man" is perceived within the community, which is dramatized by the need for him and his family to leave for Florida in order to escape the harsh gazes and criticism of their neighbours. Thus, Blossom, through her acts of protest and resistance, manages to change her experience of a private space – a private place of oppression – into a public one, effectively turning the identity of the boss-man and the representation of his home as an important marking of his standing in the community into one of shame through her use of the public space surrounding it. She effectively turned the private "place" of oppression into a "public space" of shame and justice.

However, in spite of this success, Blossom must also face certain difficulties associated with her marginal status:

> So life go on as it supposed to go on, until Blossom decide not to go to work one day. That time, they was living on Vaughan Road and Blossom wake up feeling

> like a old woman. Just tired. Something tell she to stay home and figure out she life, because a thirty-six-year-old woman shouldn't feel so old and tired. She look at she face in the mirror and she figure that she look like a old woman too. Ten years she here now, and nothing shaking, just getting older and older, watching white people live. She, sheself living underneath all the time (37).

The constant pressure of being present within and taking care of the private spaces of her clients has pushed Blossom into feeling like an old lady ahead of her time. The energy that would have otherwise been spent on cultivating her own private sense and the pleasures of place in her own home has always gone to that of others. Therefore, Blossom decides to quit her job and open an Obeah house. An Obeah is "a system of belief among blacks chiefly of the British West Indies and the Guianas that is characterized by the use of magic ritual to ward off misfortune or to cause harm".[13] The practice of Obeah, which was once illegal in most places, was a way for slaves to associate and organise amongst themselves to rebel against their masters.[14] In this respect it is quite possible that Blossom creates her Obeah house in order to both rebel from the master-slave trope she was forced into, and to create a safe space, not only for members of her community with the same beliefs, but also for herself. Blossom, when becoming Oya, effectively attempts to break down the hegemonic discourses of her marginalized place within the Canadian society she has been forced into and simultaneously rebuild her identity as one with agency. Blossom's decision to quit working as a cleaning lady for the white community and to open an Obeah house (that soon becomes a speakeasy) within her home is her way of resisting oppression and of trying to avoid falling into the "nothing aint breaking" depression that she was experiencing:

[13] https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/obeah
[14] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Obeah

> Blossom's was a obeah house and speakeasy on Vaughan road. People didn't come for the cheap liquor Blossom sell ... It was the feel of the place ... This was Blossom's most successful endeavour since coming to Canada. Every once in a while, under her breath, she cursed the day she come to Toronto from Oropuche, Trinidad. But nothing, not even snarky white people, could keep Blossom under (31).

Blossom just decided to up and change her life one day while watching people heading to work from her window: "She was looking out the window, toward the bus stop on Vaughan Road, thinking this. Looking at people going to work like they does do every morning. It make she even more tired to watch them. Today she was supposed to go to a house on Roselawn" (37). From her place within her home she was easily able to understand how the different interactions in space have come to affect her and those like her, who continue to struggle in their day to day lives in order to make ends meet.

It is also worth noting that Brand often mentions street names in her short stories, effectively concretizing the socio-economic dimensions of these spaces. When Blossom is looking outside from the "safe" place of her home, she is better able to recognize the positive effects of the surrounding neighbourhood on her own life, a space that affords her a sense of a collective place. While she is within the houses she cleans, she is constantly perceived as an outsider, which re-emphasizes her identity as an Other, as a marginalized subject who does not belong. Her newfound confidence and purpose in life is evident to those who visit her: "Black people on Vaughan Road recognize Blossom as gifted and powerful by she carriage and the fierce look in she eyes. She fill she rooms with compelling powder and relian smoke, drink rum and spit it in the corners, for the spirits who would enter Blossom obeah house in the night" (41). The goddess Oya, whom Blossom communes with, and Blossom's decision to transform her private home into a communal place, can be interpreted as representative of Blossom and

those of her community who visit her Obeah house's resistance to the social forces associated with white dominant public spaces, and thus to create their own collective place, a place that supports their identity.

Blossom/Oya offers a safe place where people may come together as a community and resist, in their own way, the oppression that pervades their lives through their experiences and internalization of the negativity of such places. This is how Blossom becomes well known in the community; "Blossom fame as a obeah woman spread all over, but only among those who had to know. Those who see the hoary face of suffering and feel the vibrant slap could come to dance with Oya - Oya freeness dance" (42).On the nights that Oya does not come, Blossom waits for her by sitting against the window of her home, looking out, as though the inspiration of Oya can only come when she looks without herself, her place, in order to see further: "On the nights that Oya didn't come, Blossom sell liquor and wait for she, sitting against the window" (42). Her identity has been bound up by her role as an obeah woman for Oya and as such she has created her own place of belonging through her body.

There are many such instances in which the Blossom character and others from short stories by Brand, Bissoondath and Clarke, remain inside their homes and look out into the world rather than joining it and being agentive in the construction of the public spaces, therefore automatically asserting influence on the private places of others who would be looking out. It could be argued that because these characters are migrant subjects they are internalizing the spaces differently than those who feel they already belong to Canadian society. This is most apparent given that in almost every short story the characters want to go "home." Blossom "curses" coming to Toronto, the woman from "No Rinsed Blue Sky, No Red Flower Fences" wants to be sent back. Even though both manage to get by in the outside, public, world, the fact that they feel most secure in their private "places, " that they are so often depicted as remaining on the inside and looking out at the city clearly symbolizes how marginalized they are within

the larger society. Furthermore, the fact that these characters are women is also important because the traditionally accepted place of a woman is within that of the home. This further marginalizes them as they cannot actively participate, create and meaningfully affect the outside spaces and therefore, their own places. They can then, also, be considered triply marginalized as they are affected by being Black, by being women, and by being migrant. This portrayal of how the spaces and places affect the marginalized individuals is consistent with Alonso that "The equation of the dominant ethnic identity with the core of the nation, and location of the subordinated ethnic identities at its peripheries, is secured partly through differential power over private and public spaces" (394). Even though they resist in their own fashion, they are unable to get out because the public space is being pushed onto them; as for these characters, they constantly internalize this public space by looking "out" into that space which defines their place. The only time that their attempts at pushing past the assigned boundaries were successful was when they appropriated public spaces such as when Blossom spoke out about the boss man's rape by protesting on the streets, or when the female narrator from the story "Train to Montreal" attempted to defiantly stare others in the eyes. By attempting to re appropriate these spaces in order to make them safe for Black migrant women (and others) they can then begin to change their own places in order to feel more "at home."

Clarke and the Peripheral Places

The places in which Clarke's protagonists find themselves in several of his short stories are homes in which the characters do not feel at home. This is seen in the short story "Initiation" as mentioned in the first chapter. However, the context of the apartment in Jane and Finch can be analyzed through both space and place. Whereas the space was analyzed through the outside forces infringing upon the apartment and the events that occurred there, the discourses inside

the apartment as a place are also quite telling as to the characters' levels of belonging or unbelonging.

Just as the neighbourhood applies a specific discourse onto the inhabitants of the apartment of Jane and Finch, so too do the people of that apartment upon those who enter their place. The narrator feels this pressure: "I knew that the etiquette and the protocol of this room demanded that I take it [the cigarette]" (30). In order to find another way to belong, he looks around the room**:** "I continued to look around the small room, trying to find some object which might give me balance, a context, and be able to place myself within this room" (33). He uses the discourses that the room presents to him through the paraphernalia in order to uncover its identity so that he may assemble the signs which would transmit that he belongs. He is an outsider in this place and attempts to appropriate the discourses of the room and its occupants in order to validate his presence there. Unfortunately, it becomes evident that he remains an outsider and that the same way he attempts to appropriate the discourses of the room in order to belong also validates his unbelonging as he misjudges the people he is spending time with. At first, it is insinuated that the dealings going on are illegal, and that the individuals are less than savory. However, we find out at the end of the story that Barrington was selling his car and that the individuals in the room were veterans of the Korean War and even still fighting in the Vietnam War. The narrator's perception of the spaces surrounding the apartment made him judge the contents of the room in a much different light and therefore see the individuals through a skewed lense. This is an example of how the spaces may affect the places through the point of view of an outsider entering the place of another. However, as the short story "Trying To Kill Herself" demonstrates, the outside can also have devastating effects on how one feels inside.

The short story "Trying to Kill Herself" is extremely heavy in visuals of the narrator's claustrophobic environment. The narrator has trouble distinguishing between her home and that

of every other neighbour on the street where she lives: “She looked at the houses along the street, and saw no difference, no distinguishing mark in their character and build. Back home, we build each house different from all the others, to bring out the personality of the house *and* the owner. But up here, every house is made to look the same. Just like the people” (97). This is made worse for her during the winter: “The snow had buried every landmark and identification and clue she was accustomed to, that helped her distinguish her rooming house from the other houses that lined her street. When the snow fell like this, and when it was night, she was lost in whiteness” (96). There is a double entendre to being “lost in whiteness” through the fact that she emphasizes the difference between her home in her place of origin through the previous quotation and her being in Toronto. As the protagonist in this story attempts to escape the city at large by returning to the relative safety of her basement apartment, the reader is introduced to a whole new aspect of the effects of isolation for migrant people. Even though she states that she is not lonely, “Living alone for so many years, loneliness never really touched her, and made her sad, not so long as she had her Bible and her white Solo telephone, with three extension cords added to the original curled length” (101-2).

She uses her telephone to stay connected and does not realize her own dependence upon her need for connection to others:

> She stopped talking and listened to Millicent’s voice; and when Millicent stopped talking, she too remained silent, and listened to Millicent’s breathing, … and listened and thought and could utter no word, as if the weight of words she wanted to speak but could not, were too heavy. Still, she did not speak. And still, she did not end the conversation. She could almost hear the distance from the centre of the city up to the suburbs where Millicent lived, in the noise of the silence the Solo [telephone] was making. It was like this sometimes. When she just needed to know there was someone at the other end of the telephone, but incapable of continuing

> the conversation. Millicent called her crazy for doing this. Millicent asked if she had something on her mind, when she did this. And she said, 'I know it's bad manners to be like this, but I have nothing to say, child. Nothing do I have to say.' It was some time before she realized that Millicent had had enough, and had hung up on her ... When she realized that the telephone was dead, she was cut off from the rest of the world, feeling as if she was cut off from a friend she had loved all her life, forsaken for the harsh decision of that kind of termination, and not being able to call, to hear the person's voice, but not to speak, just the desire to hear a human voice, feeling the hurtful pain of being cut off, since there was a new number 'at the customer's request, unlisted,' she sighed. How could people be so cruel?" (103-4).

Her sense of isolation is visible in her small social circle: "Her world is the world of her three best friends" (114). However, since she only associates with them at work or over the phone, her loneliness is also apparent in how she begins to feel as though she is being watched, therefore closes the lights. She also simultaneously feels the need for company; "She begins to feel unsafe. She put the television on to bring more people in the room, to protect her" (112). As further evidence of the detrimental effects of her anonymous neighbourhood on her psyche is her discovery that one of her neighbours has been killed by the police. This further suggests that there may be state violence due to racialization in the urban spaces. She may not feel safe as a woman, and as a woman of colour in her community. Unfortunately, discourses of the community penetrate through the walls of her home and affect her psyche. Furthermore, the dog that she took in from the street dies accidentally by her hand. These are the catalysts that make her slip into a kind of post-traumatic state; "Three days have passed now, and have found her flat on her back, unable to move, too weak and too weakened; too tormented and afraid that

should she move from beneath the three thick blankets, the thing on her mind, the death of the dog, its murder, would be exposed to the world, and bring her continuing bad luck" (114).

Her mental health is closely related to her living environment. She is in the "ghetto" as she reminds her friend Milicent over the phone: "Perhaps up in Scarborough where you live, people does behave so. But down here, in this ghetto, where there's all this crime, with people unemploy', undecentness to make a sinner croil in shame, rapes every day, they would swear there's a connection between the colour of my skin and the extremity of my action" (109). She has lived in this small basement apartment for too long:

> Thinking, as she descended into the darkened steps to her basement apartment, that she must get out soon, out of this underground living, this confining hole ... And she made up her mind that first thing in the new year, first thing come the new year, I moving from this basement' cause basements're where animals should live, not human beings, a place where you put distant cousins to sleep on a weekend (97).

Her "home" does not feel like one to her, it is not romanticized. Her estrangement with a place which she can call home is deeper than the dislocation from the Caribbean to Canada. The outside spaces encroach upon her supposed sanctuary and make her feel insecure. The imagery of her basement apartment as 'underground living" and a "confining hole" alludes to her potentially having one foot in the ground and of not living any kind of life. This is further emphasized by her phone conversation with Milicent going "dead." In short, her home place, her supposed place of belonging does not act as such and only further demonstrates how much she does not feel as though she belongs. She is not a criminal or indecent person who should be relegated to the ghetto. However, her social, racial, immigrant status as well as female gender force her into those marginal places, and those are the ones in which she must force herself to live.

It is through these enclosed places that the characters begin to feel the outside pressures that affect them and label them as Other. Chanady states that:

> Prolonged confinement in them [enclosed spaces] can also lead to a sense of suffocation, such as the proverbial cabin fever. Immigrant fiction adds an additional dimension. Whereas the enclosed spaces of houses, bars, and cafes provide a sense of safety, familiarity, and comforting interaction with one's ethnic group, they may also involve ghettoization and isolation from the rest of society. Furthermore, they sometimes impede harmonious social interaction, or even exacerbate conflict, both within the group and between immigrants and residents (61).

Clarke's characters offer great examples of the suffocation the immigrant characters feel based on the influences of their homes on their psyche. The protagonist from "Trying To Kill Herself" effectively feels the pressure from her home and wonders: "Why have I lived like this? Cut off, cut off, cut off!" (121), as she slips deeper into this type of "cabin fever" and begins the process of "trying to kill herself" by wasting away in her basement apartment. The individuality that she searched for in regards to her rooming house in order to contrast it from her home of origin is lacking and could represent how she is not able to belong. She is not able to make changes to her home in order to appropriate it and even finds the defining markers of her environment difficult to spot so that she may find her apartment. This lack of appropriation both for an understanding of the environment in Canada, as well as for her apartment demonstrates how she is unwilling to attempt to belong and only allows the public and private spaces to act upon her. She does not push back upon the discourses of her environment and allows it to permeate into the walls and into her own body until she does not see the point, or is incapable of seeing any point in living. It is as though the city and her "home" attempt to suffocate her because she does

not belong and is unable or unwilling to force herself to belong within the environment she finds herself in.

* * *

The relationships between the characters from the various short stories and their home places are fraught with uncertainties based on the social discourses that infringe upon their private lives. Douglas also says of the home that; "it is easily subverted and survives only so long as it attends to the needs of its members" (307). Following Douglas' logic, it is easy to ascertain that many of the characters in these short stories have negative associations to home in Canada. And so far as they do not consider Canada as their home, but only to a moment of transience until they are able to return "home," then they live in a liminal space belonging to neither environment. Therefore, their actual homes, whether in Canada or otherwise, are non-existent. Yet, the home environment, through lacking in positive associations, becomes a confining place for the characters where they are forced to re-experience their own unbelonging.

The notion of home places becomes a negative one as it is associated with unbelonging. The nostalgia for the home of "origins" then becomes much more poignant and therefore makes those same remembered origins less attainable. Allison Hui suggests that "nostalgia is temporal both because it gestures to the past and because it changes as people engage with it over time. This suggests that space and time from which people evoke nostalgia are as important as the space and time nostalgia evokes" (65). This means that the moment the characters feel this sense of nostalgia is one in which they are reinscribing their place in Canada as a further site of oppression in that, similarly to the shift experienced by Mr. Ramgoolam, the characters live in uncertainty, an uncertainty

that affects their identity and does not allow them to belong in the spaces or places around them.

Chapter 3: Gender and Mobility

> Transform us into being. That one door transformed us into bodies emptied of being, bodies empty of self-interpretation, into which new interpretations could be placed. . . . I am, we are, in the Diaspora, bodies occupied. If we return to the door it is to retrieve what was left, to look at it—even if it is an old sack, threadbare with time, empty itself of meaning. (*A Map to the Door of No Return*, Brand 93-4)

Gender and mobility are important factors affecting migrant Caribbean-Canadian bodies as they are especially bound to negotiate space and place differently than those born in Canada. Caribbean-Canadian women, because they are Black (in most cases), women and migrants means that they are triply minoritized and that the spaces and places they occupy, as well as the potential for mobility are all highly subjective to their identities. These differences can, in part, be attributed to differences in culture but in large part can be attributed to differences in an environment built by postcolonial discourses that still favours white male hegemonic values. McKittrick and Peake state that

> space and place are central to the production of difference. ... the ways the Anglo-American tradition of Geography [the discipline] has traditionally included Western white men, and excluded women, non-white communities, and non-Western geographical [space and place as ***g***eography not ***G***eography as a subject] subjects; and the material and conceptual spatialization of difference (39-40).

Therefore, the spaces and places that the migrant Caribbean-Canadian characters find themselves negotiating and inhabiting are complicit in their "difference." The migrant characters are affected by their visible difference as minorities and as "Others" but, unfortunately, the women are triply affected on the basis of their gender, their race and the fact that they are migrants, as they cannot even negotiate the spaces and places the same way the men can. Knowing the injustices of their 'race,' they are further subjugated on the basis of their

gender and migrant status and must work even harder to gain any type of mobility. As McKittrick and Peake argue :

> Social markers such as race and gender are visible social constructs which mark differences (between whites and non-whites and men and women, for example); these differences are spatially organized and therefore not only visible through the scale of the body, but also through material geographies - different people hold different geographic positions (in the home, the workplace, the city, or the suburbs for example). Difference - in - place, then allows us to examine 'the hierarchical and unequal relationships among different groups' (Scott, 1988: 179) (40).

These unequal relationships are especially evident in these short stories collections where all of the characters "endured" discrimination on the basis of their race and cultural difference. However, the women characters experienced an even greater level of discrimination based on the added parameter of their minoritized gender. This was not necessarily pointed out as such in the various short stories; however, the fact that the only jobs all of the women characters have are related to domestic work such as housekeeping, nannies, etc, means that their potential for mobility remains extremely low. Mobility, in this case, not only refers to physical movement, but also to upward social movement, and even more importantly, to progressive mobility in how they may entertain agency over their own identity.

To reiterate how gender and the ability for movement is important in the analysis of space, I would like to quote McKittrick and Peake:

> Control over the production of space gives powerful groups the ability to produce difference as well as the right to be in space. Ghettos, underfunded women's shelters, sprawling suburbs ... are just some examples of how geography and geographic knowledge are, locally and globally, tied to practices of spatial unevenness. What these spatial formations reveal is the ways in which geography

> is mapped according to race, class and gender-specific interests. They also reveal that geographic knowledge - how we 'know' and 'understand' the external world - is inevitably tied to spatial formations and hierarchies (41).

While space, as described in this thesis, analyzes the effects of migration on the characters through social discourses and community, the minoritized (meaning women + LGBTQ2S+) gendered body is even more highly affected. This is what we will see in the same stories by Bisssoondath, Brand, and Clarke, but with a specific focus on gender.

Bissoondath and Unproductive Mobility

The female characters in the short stories by Bissoondath that were analyzed throughout the thesis have very little agency of their own. Most of the women represented in the stories are seen through a male gaze, Hari's wife, from "Digging Up the Mountains", being a grim example. While Hari is extremely worried about his fate and that of his son - similarly to that of his father and of himself- he seems to completely ignore the fact that his wife is going through the same social stigma. It is part of their back and forth discussion of this worrying time. Hari dismisses his wife and her concerns: "His wife, anguished, said, "Things really bad, hon." "*Things really bad, hon*," Hari mimicked her" ... "Because *we* might be next, me and the children." "Shut up, woman!"(1-2). The disdain and dismissal Hari exerts towards his wife is an example of how very little he thinks about her in the context of the social upheaval, as discussed in Chapter One.

The portrayal of the female characters in Bissoondath's short stories demonstrate a sore lack of agency. Another example of this can be found in Bissoondath's short story "A Short Visit to a Failed Artist": the assumption that one of the female characters is a "high-class whore" (32) is imposed upon the male protagonist. His initial response to seeing her, because of the sexuality she exudes, is solely driven by the fact that the artist character called her as

such because, paradoxically, she would not sleep with him. Even the protagonist, the narrator-focalizer, states how he had been misled: “Willie introduces me to Rachel and we say hello over Adrian’s legs. Her fingernails are two inches long and carefully painted a deep purple. Her manner - flip, cultivated, sexy - slots her as an off-duty, high-class whore, a courtesan at rest. An unjust impression: Adrian has already provided the angle of vision” (31-32). Unfortunately, the vision that Adrian paints of Rachel is not fair or flattering as he debases her before someone who has never met her: “Women are shit. Who gives a damn. Especially about Rachel. Slut. ... Rachel’s a slut. Mother Nature’s a slut. Rachel will screw anyone anywhere anytime. Give her two glances and she’s as hot as a bitch in heat” (31). It is ironic, and misogynistic, that he describes her this way as she had just refused his sexual advances.

Furthermore, this short story plays upon the sense of place that the narrator is feeling, one of embarrassment, in order to demonstrate to the reader the little social mobility that many of those from the migrant communities have. The sense of place felt by the main character when he visits the apartment of his friend (Willie) who is sheltering his brother (Adrian) and his family is one of intense discomfort. The man being sheltered is a failed artist, as per the title of the story, and he seems to be in denial about his current situation of poverty, still trying to be a successful artist; “His sister-in-law Shushilla says, “He had great ambitions, artistic ones.” She seems to stress the tense of the verb. They both say he and his wife and baby just moved from Montreal to Toronto. They have not found an apartment, they cannot afford one. They are staying with Willie and Shushilla in their Ontario Housing Corporation apartment” (29). Throughout the entire story, though the emphasis is on the failed artist Adrian, there are other individuals inhabiting the same apartment. The women are barely mentioned other than through their relationship to, or their service to, the men. Willie and Adrian’s wives are barely mentioned. Adrian and his wife Charming have a baby; however, only Charming mentions the baby as it is her responsibility to put the child to sleep, evidenced by the fact that she yells back

at Adrian to “Shut up, you’ll wake the baby” (30). Even though Adrian and Charming are married, Adrian made advances to Rachel. Charming would not have been oblivious to this; however, it is not discussed as a point of contention that Adrian’s behaviour is disrespectful towards both Charming and Rachel. Unfortunately, the “angle of vision” of the women in this story is a blind spot; the women are completely dismissed as individuals with their own agency, with preferences of their own.

What is just as intriguing is that the narrator and his friend are clearly embarrassed by this man and his refusal to accept the fact that he is a failed artist: “I detect a note of uncalculated excitement in his voice. It is embarrassing” (34). Through the sense of space, the failed artist is not accepting his place in society and within his own community because he is not effectively accepting his position as a person who “scrubs the floors” (33). It would seem that the use of place in this short story is more to demonstrate how some *male i*ndividuals who have difficulty adapting to a new environment can be seen by other members of their community that have better managed living in Canada.

Their migration from Montreal to Toronto and their being unable to afford their own apartment speaks volumes as to the difficulty of upward social mobility. The fact that they are living at the narrator’s friend’s place, in a housing complex, rather than on their own, emphasizes their inability to make it on their own. They are essentially stuck borrowing from someone else because they are unable to establish their own place within this new community.

Another example of how their position in society, both as marginalized subjects and as members of a lower social class, affects the genders differently is the power structures within the relationship. This is evidenced when Adrian asks Charming to go out and buy him some cigarettes, even though he already has some on hand, and even insults her for not wanting to go for him. This disrespectful behaviour towards the woman who is supposed to be sharing his life in equal measure is anything but equal, especially as Charming is busy with their baby.

In criticizing the "failed artist" the characters borrow the generalized societal discourses views of what is considered successful in order to create their negative opinion of him. They do not realize that they are reinscribing their own boundaries and the limitations of their potential identities within the societal discourses. Therefore, they are recreating and perpetuating the cycle of marginalization and postcolonial/cultural appropriation which binds them and others through the judgments they pass onto others that are detrimental to themselves and others. Not only do they do this through their interpretations of each other as men but they also reinscribe the behaviour onto the women in their lives by debasing them. It is possible that they are reinscribing their own marginalization onto the women in their entourage because it enables them to feel a sense of upward mobility because there is someone "lower" than them that they may manipulate the same way they are being manipulated. In so doing they are reinscribing the domination to which they are submitted and applying it to the female bodies, therefore enforcing their own subjugation.

Brand and Circular Mobility

Brand's short stories highlight the importance of gender and 'race', the experiences of the characters being heavily based on the unfair treatment of racialized women, specifically the migrant women as visible minorities. To further develop Brand's short story "Blossom: Priestess of Oya, Goddess of winds, storms and waterfall," that was discussed in Chapter two, I focus on a gender-oriented perception in order to deepen our understanding of the effects of place on the role of women. This can be done by looking at how Blossom attempts to take back ownership of her identity by becoming an "Other," but one of her own choosing by opening her speakeasy and becoming a priestess of Oya. However, by doing this she is also attempting to subvert the gender, ethnicity and class discourses that would negatively be impacting her person and, ultimately, others like her. As Saskia Furst mentions:

> The ancestral ghostly memories provided when Oya possesses Blossom's body meld with Blossom's present psyche, intertwining past experiences with present ones to provide symbolic liberation. … the haunting of her psyche by the goddess motivates Blossom to persevere in an otherwise hostile host environment. The voice and oral stories of Oya have not been a part of Blossom's integration into life in Canada. However, through the haunting of her dreaming mind, Blossom has the strength to scare away the personified Suffering of her ancestors in her dreaming state because she has embodied the abilities of the Goddess Oya. This emergence of the past enables Blossom to heal and banish her own suffering, associated with the legacy of slavery, and her personal dependency on her white male oppressors in the Canada of the present" (Furst 73).

Blossom effectively attempts to create a history for herself within the Canadian environment through her appropriation of Oya and Oya's history. This gives her "roots" in order to attempt to belong. Oya was not part of Blossom's history in her home of origin since Blossom was not an obeah woman until she faced unjust social circumstances. These circumstances (attempted rape) evidenced her situation as a marginalized Black migrant woman of low social standing and how she was dependent upon the unjust system of the white male oppressors. She had always been in a difficult position in Canada through her identity markers, but through her appropriation of Oya, she became able to dismiss the environment within which her social, racial and gendered position marginalized her. Oya gave her the strength necessary to overcome her hardships by acknowledging her suffering and that of others like her. It also permitted her to open her own speakeasy and obeah house which allowed her to gain the financial freedom to remain "home" and create an environment of resistance.

Before deciding on a course of action to better her life, Blossom experiences several moments where she is taken advantage of, and not only by white men in higher social positions.

Unfortunately for Blossom, even the women characters, whether Black or White, are presented as not supportive of each other. She is led on by Fancy Girl, who started a pyramid scheme and conned several people; when the "white man boss-man" (33), who is a doctor, attempts to push himself sexually upon her, his wife does not even support her: "The wife face red and shame and then she start to watch Blossom cut eye. Well look at my cross nah Lord, Blossom think, here this dog trying to abuse me and she watching *me* cut eye!" (33). However, Blossom has a strong character and her reactions to the situation must cause difficulties for the doctor since he and his family leave to spend an undetermined amount of time in Florida following Blossom's "strike" in front of his house with a placard saying "Dr. So-and-So was a white rapist" (34). She even decides that "no white man should be over she, and she was figuring a way to save some money to do she own business" (34). Blossom then goes on to work, until she decides not to because she is exhausted and does not think she should be so tired at the age of 36; "Ten years she here now, and nothing shaking, just getting older and older, watching white people live. She herself living underneath all the time" (37). This reflexion in Blossom brought about a change in which she chased Victor (her husband, who had been taking advantage of her) away and refused to work, barely ate and went through a sort of existential crisis: "She had the feeling that she was holding she body around she heart, holding herself together, tight tight" (38). It is in this condensed version of her physical self that she comes to meet and represent the goddess Oya. Then is revealed within a "most terrifying dream" that Oya makes Blossom "look at Black people suffering. The face of the Black people suffering was so old and hoary that Blossom nearly dead" (39). Furst explains:

> The self-empowerment and subsequent identity development of the protagonists is possible ... through reading their bodies as palimpsests, because of the ghostly memories interwoven into their own psyches. Their subsequent collective memories provide the agency for their positive self-development while

> away from home and living in societies that may prove hostile to black Caribbean women. As Kathleen Brogan argues, 'collective memory functions . . . to support the identity of the group . . . Yet collective memories, however stabilizing to group identities, are in fact repeatedly reinterpreted over time in answer to changing [individual] needs, so that the present is informed by a past that in turn is continually revised by present [individual] perspectives' (1998, 130). As palimpsests, their narratives bring past absences into the present to assist the narrators, according to their personal needs, revising history in the process. In providing a collective memory of the past, the black Caribbean authors discussed by Furst, Danticat and Brand, bring attention to the submerged Afro-Caribbean female voices as they struggle to emerge in the present lives of the protagonists, contextualizing the Afro-Caribbean diaspora, its history, and its presence in the lives of individual women located in the US and Canada" (74).

The system itself subjugates these women and forces them to stay within a specific environment, not only on the basis of gender but also because of their race/ethnicity and class - which exacerbate their limitations; they are not even given the choice to become mobile. They are forced to remain static, to repeat the stagnation found within the various institutions. Furthermore, if they do not reappropriate their environment and the social discourses that affect them, then the possibilities for movement are also limited and therefore affect how they then inscribe their environment and identities. As McKittrick and Peak suggest; "'different' bodies are not only assigned 'different' geographies, they are also actively experiencing and producing space" (41) For instance, the main character from "No Rinsed Blue Sky, No Red Flower Fences" by Brand was only able to find limited employment as a nanny, and therefore comes to be at the mercy of the "master" while taking care of his children. She was not only at the mercy of the white "master" but also of the eyes that were watching her:

> She'd worked "illegal" for six years. Taking care of children, holding their hands across busy streets, standing with them at corners which were incongruous to her colour, she herself incongruous to the little hands, held as if they were more precious than she, made of gold, and she just the black earth around. She was always uncomfortable under the passing gazes, muttering to herself that she knew, they didn't have to tell her that she was out of place here. But there was no other place to be right now. The little money fed her sometimes, fed her children back home, no matter the stark scene which she created on the corners of the street. She, black, silent and unsmiling; the child, white, tugging and laughing, or whining (86-7).

The protagonist mentions it herself, that the passing gazes made her uncomfortable because they reassigned how she already felt, as not belonging to that environment, in the company of the white child. This is a very good example of how the gaze may also cause others to feel marginalized. As Katie Mullins states: "geographic hierarchies – different scales of power and knowledge which can be seen in cities, on streets, in homes, on bodies, across nations – continually privilege white, heterosexual, and patriarchal patterns so that different bodies are shaped by the world around them in favourable or adverse (or both) ways" (44). The situation in which the Black migrant women find themselves based on their race, affects the roles given to them through their gender as well, forcing them into the role of "nurturers and providers." Simultaneously, the white-hegemonic postcolonial discourses render the situation extremely precarious:

> The avoided telephone calls recurred, answer no, ring, no answer, cupped to her mouth; the empty stomach; looking for a job, four hundred University eight, no tenth floor, the immigration department, the smell of the lobby, it rose from the carpet, mixed with the air conditioner and the thud of the elevators. People hunched their shoulders, all the women, she included, perfumed to sickness, nylon encasing

> their legs, stood stiffly in the elevator...pleading with someone there...would they send her home, would they pity her children please…" (Brand 92).

These types of bureaucratic processes are set up in such a way as to make upward social mobility difficult for those who need the help, especially for the migrant woman since the types of jobs available, especially at the time these stories were written, were extremely gendered. This kept women in certain positions where the spaces and places available to them was quite limited. However, unfortunately, this character also demonstrates how the possibility for escaping her social position, as well as the city and its hegemonic discourses, are nullified, as she is forced to return to the same job, the same dingy apartments, etc:

> She fled. She could only perfect this flight in her dream. Rushing outside to the street, she plunged into the sea of snow, wrapped bodies, snorting cars making clouds of smoked ice. Reaching the subway, she rode to the end, where the work crowd thinned out - High Park, Runnymede, Old Mill. Coming up, the train reached a bare sky, scarred trees, gully, apartment building, stopping. She came out, let the train pass, sat looking through the glass of the station. She sat there for hours, getting back on the train, changing stations, only to find herself sometimes back in the elevator trying to breathe the perfume, the smell of whiteness around her, a dull choking smell (Brand 92)

This cyclical way of living in which she finds herself is an example of Gupta and Ferguson's argument that "important tensions may arise when places that have been imagined at a distance must become lived spaces. For places are always imagined in the context of political-economic determinations that have a logic of their own. Territoriality is thus reinscribed at just the point it threatens to be erased" (11). The narrator in this story is stuck in this type of environment but continually tries to reappropriate herself and her agency by moving, both in the city and in her apartment. This, in order to reappropriate her home, by painting the walls vibrant colours and

decorating her apartment in such a way that reminds her of home. However, she is stuck with her compulsive need to move because she is unsuccessful at creating a homeplace for herself and never truly feels at home anywhere. Alonso states the importance for migrant women of reappropriating home:

> the ethnic and gender politics of private spaces [are examined] by focusing on the difficulties faced by African-American women, many of them domestic workers in the employ of whites, in constructing their own "homeplaces." She knows how the hierarchical opposition between private and public spaces is put into question by these women who redefine home as a healing refuge and site for collective personal resistance (394).

Unfortunately for this character, she is neither creating a homeplace that is a healing refuge nor a site of personal resistance. She simply reinscribes her unbelonging every time she moves by attempting to reestablish her home of origin into each apartment in Canada through her choice of paint colours, and decoration, etc. Therefore, her nostalgia for her home of origin does not allow her to create a true new home for herself since she is stuck in the ideals of the past and elsewhere.

Blossom, from the short story "Blossom, priestess of Oya, Goddess of Winds, Storms and Waterfalls" went through a similar situation where she also was only able to find stable employment through white men until she reclaimed her body. Mullins summarizes here Joanna Garvey's reading on Brand's collection; she

> reads the collection in terms of Brand's treatment of nation, diaspora, and exile, arguing that struggling with the consequences of a colonized past in the Caribbean as well as with the contemporary realities of global economics, [the] women [in Brand's fiction] express a repeated need to leave the place they occupy . . . and to find a space of empowerment (486) (5).

This proves especially poignant for these two short stories. Unfortunately, the forward mobility that would enable these women to have a bright future does not seem feasible as the current amount of years they have spent attempting to "get ahead" has not brought them anywhere closer to improving their situation.

Clarke and the Illusion of Mobility

Clarke's short story collection "In This City" has an almost equal amount of female protagonists as male ones. However, as the stories in this collection discuss how the characters navigate their way around the marginal spaces and places they inhabit, the attempts at belonging for the women highly differ from those of the men. The male gaze is depicted as incredibly powerful, both towards the men and the women within the short stories. An example of the strength of the male gaze geared towards another male, the protagonist in this case can be seen in the short story "Initiation": "his eyes were grey and piercing. They went right through me, and this determination of gaze made him more powerful, and me, withered against his disapproval" (26-27). The protagonist is the same professor described in Chapter One and Two, who wants to be a part of the group of Black men, to feel as though he belongs, to be a "brother." However, his own gaze, towards the other men, also separates him because he judges them based on where they are situated within the city and how they depict their own identities. As an example, his student, Barrington, whom he is visiting this apartment with, portrays himself differently in order to belong to the group as well as with his professor, even though he does not have the same social background. This is made evident by the fact that he drives his own car, but not just any car, a Mercedes-Benz. Here is the professor's reflection on his being fooled by Barrington's discourse:

> He gave the impression for the first semester I was his professor in Black Literature that he was a neglected, indigent, fatherless and motherless product of

> Jane and Finch. "Product of the ghetto" is the phrase he would always use to describe himself … I was accepting his definition of himself, romanticizing that definition and making my friendship with Barrington and my own understanding of him more easy to swallow (27).

The city at large affects the community of the "black brotherhood" within the apartment on Jane and Finch, as described by the narrator. However, he recognizes that their identity is also created through their reinscription into a black brotherhood that is mostly based on a costume fashioned to identify as such. This act of attempted reappropriation to control the narratives of their identities does not necessarily have the same effect through the gazes of others:

> And here in Jane and Finch so different from where I lived in this same city; still the same words, shouted at me as if the men shouting them felt that I was an unbeliever, a West Indian man and not one of them. But I kept coming back to the shouts and the meaning I got from the shouts when they were not too confused by the spit of their own violence. And I began to wonder if this is the meaning, the quintessence, of the new blackness taking root in this city. I was beginning to feel I was in Harlem (29).

Bogle highlights the necessity of place as a shelter for the vulnerable masculinities of the men in the short story and how it plays an important role in the formation of their identities;

> the men in "Initiation" are positioned as vulnerable and thus need the private space to allow themselves to become more than what is necessary to meet the public gaze and expectation of black masculinity. Although they exhibit a certain type of roughness early in the text, eventually they are revealed as insecure and subject to rapid changes and movements along the continuum of masculinity and are indeed protected by the physicality of the space that they inhabit (par. 17).

This cyclical process of identity creation through the spaces and places that are subject to the gazes of others are problematic as they reinscribe discourses of unbelonging. Near the end of this story the song "This is a Man's World" by James Brown is playing, setting the tone for how the protagonist interprets the "Brothers" in the room. The following citation, taken from Dominic Pasura and Anastasia Christou's article, explains how the narrator reinscribes these discourses onto the other:

> At the core of the concept of masculinity, Morrell and Ouzgane (2005, 4) argue, is the "evident fact that not all men have the same amount or type of power, the same opportunities, and consequently, the same life trajectories." For Connell (1995, 81), gender and masculinity are social and historical processes which are constituted not by individual human action but also by larger "configurations of practice." Although hegemonic masculinity is the dominant form of male power, Connell (1995) allows for the existence of "lesser" forms of masculinities—those that are complicit, subordinate, and marginalized. Hegemonic masculinity sustains its position through the active subordination of other masculinities in order to create a hierarchical relationship within the traditional gender binary as well as across it (Connell 1987; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005) (524).

In this story, the fact that the characters use costume to demonstrate that they belong to a certain group puts them both in a position of power, for choosing where they want to belong, and in a marginalized position. With their choice of conforming to the image imposed on them for belonging to the ghetto through the wearing of such "costumes," their identity becomes inscribed as belonging to the specific group they have chosen to imitate, to the point where the narrator feels as though they are in "Harlem," and no longer in Toronto. Regarding subject construction, Belsey suggests that:

> The subject is constructed in language and in discourse and, since the symbolic order in its discursive use is closely related to ideology, in ideology. It is in this sense that ideology has the effect, as Althusser argues, of constituting individuals as subjects, and it is also in this sense that their subjectivity appears 'obvious.' Ideology suppresses the role of language in the construction of the subject. As a result, people 'recognize' (misrecognize) themselves in the ways in which ideology 'interpellates them, or in other words, addresses them as subjects, calls them by their names and in turn recognizes their autonomy. As a result, they 'work by themselves' (Althusser 1971, p. 169), they 'willingly' adopt the subject positions necessary to their participation in the social formation (660).

It is this social formation that functions to create the different levels of belonging and unbelonging for the characters in the text. The individuals that become subjects through alterity must earn the right to belong. As is made evident in both Chapters One and Two, the narrator demonstrates a cyclical view of the identities of the men in the apartment in Jane and Finch. He reinscribes the discourses of the city at large from the spaces outside the apartment onto those inside. He also uses those discourses in order to fashion his understanding of the men inside the room using the differing objects inside in order to cement their identity as belonging to a certain marginalized group. However, we learn at the end of the short story that the narrator did not understand those whom he had judged and consequently cements his own position as a marginalized individual through his lack of progression in understanding others. Therefore, his role as a professor of Black Literature is completely undermined by his lack of understanding of the culture(s) he is trying to teach. This is made evident by the fact that he did not recognize most of the texts or music or art by Black artists in the apartment and that he was pleased to recognize the “mistake” of finding Shakespeare grouped in with the other texts. What is made poignant by this discovery is the fact that the colonial discourses that have shaped the narrator’s

upbringing are still very much present through his lack of knowledge, his quickness to judge those around him and attempt to gain "racial credibility." To emphasize the complexity of the interactions Bogle states that:

> The professor who functions as the narrator and interlocutor initially positions the men in the room as dangerous and likely to fit the stereotype of rough black men. Inclusion of the figure of the black professor is representative of the precarious space in which Clarke and other Afro-Canadian men operate. That is, a privileged individual endorsed and legitimized by institutions of authority whose existence and achievements repudiate popular essentializing narratives of black masculinity. Clarke plays with this archetypal figure in several ways, whether through his inability to truly inhabit certain spaces, as in "Initiation,"... (par.16).

This may lead us to believe that as a Black Caribbean-Canadian he is even further marginalized as his identity does not belong with those of the Black community but also that his place as a University professor teaching a specific type of Black Literature marks him as a tool of colonial power, allowing the same discourses he had grown up with. For all of the prestige that he has gained by becoming a professor and living in an affluent neighbourhood in Toronto, he still is "segregated" from the 'brothers,' as well as from any opportunity to belong within members of his ethnic community. As much as he believes he has moved through the social spheres in order to be in a "better" position socially by living in an affluent neighbourhood and working in a prestigious position, his ability to belong is one which is cemented in the colonial past, not actually allowing him any type of mobility.

* * *

The attempts at mobility by the various characters, in order to improve their social standing, their right to belong, and their own well-being, are affected by their identities as im/migrants, as visible ethnic minorities, as well as through their gender and social positions. Unfortunately, as Nira Yuval-Davis states;

> inclusion or exclusion is often not mutual, depending on the power positionality and normative values of the social actors as well as, and in relation to, their cognitive and emotional identifications. Constructions of self and identity can, in certain historical contexts, be forced on people. In such cases, identities and belonging/s become important dimensions of people's social locations and positionings, and the relationships between locations and identifications can also become more closely intertwined empirically (17-8).

The reasons for migration vary from character to character in all three short story collections; however, as Yuval-Davis states "The drive for migration, which is never taken lightheartedly, is most often spurred on by a generic aspiration to have a better chance of the good life" (37). This drive for a better life is expressed by all of the characters, even if it is not explicitly mentioned. It can be found in their need for movement, and how they are affected by the various discourses that cause them so much difficulty when they attempt to belong. Whether it is Bissoondath's failed artist, or Brand's Obeah priestess, or Clarke's professor, they are all attempting to find ways to belong by attempting to have better lives through social mobility. They remain on the margins, still attempting to better their own lives and situations. They attempt to do this by creating environments for themselves where they may belong. Whether it is through artistic endeavour, religious community, or by joining a brotherhood, their need to belong is obvious. However, as Roxanne Rimstead and Domenic Beneventi state:

> Often a lack of mobility indicates limited possibilities in the present or the past, but also the limited perception of future possibilities among people who have little

> spatial power within a given social system. Similarly, mobility may also, ironically, signal a lack of agency in the sense that for certain populations (such as homeless vagrants, street kids, prostitutes) conspicuous urban visibility may lead to endangerment, violence, or arrest (3).

It is through this lack of mobility that the characters remain on the margins, unable to move.

Conclusion

> The door signifies the historical moment which colours all moments in the Diaspora. It accounts for the ways we observe and are observed as people, whether it's through the lens of social injustice or the lens of human accomplishments. The door exists as an absence. A thing in fact which we do not know about, a place we do not know. Yet it exists as the ground we walk. Every gesture our bodies make somehow gestures toward this door. What interests me primarily is probing the Door of No Return as consciousness. The door casts a haunting spell on personal and collective consciousness in the Diaspora. Black experience in any modern city or town in the Americas is a haunting. One enters a room and history follows; one enters a room and history precedes. History is already seated in the chair in the empty room when one arrives. Where one stands in a society seems always related to this historical experience. Where one can be observed is relative to that history. All human effort seems to emanate from this door. How do I know this? Only by self-observation, only by looking. Only by feeling. Only by being a part, sitting in the room with history. (*A Map to the Door of No Return*, Brand 24-5)

Historical discourses delineate the trajectories of the spaces and places we inhabit. The characters in these short story collections, within their environments and inherent rules, are subjected to these discourses along with their racialized, gendered and classed bodies. Thus they are only able to navigate the difficulties of these pre-established societal rules while attempting to create their own sense of belonging in their new environments. As Patrick Imbert states:

> la promesse de s'appartenir se fait dans la rencontre avec les autres qui, eux aussi, s'appartiennent et tentent d'asseoir leurs désirs d'expansion scientifique, culturelle ... Le transculturel représente une sémiosis partagée dans une expérimentation constante de la réflexivité critique sur les systèmes de signification, les rapports de pouvoir et leur utilisation stratégique par nous et les autres, à titre de membres de plusieurs groupes, mais aussi de l'immédiateté pratique et quotidienne de rencontres. Ce sont tous ces mouvements de désir et d'ouverture qui s'affichent et

> parfois s'étiolent dans les espaces immenses, en transition permanentes, que sont les Amériques (47).

While the spaces and places are in constant recreation by the users which define them, they are also always contested by these users who wish to make their own spaces and places in environments where they belong. Unfortunately, for the migrant bodies as represented by the characters in these short story collections, not only do they fail to integrate into the "new" spaces and places but they also fail to integrate through their interactions within these environments. Their "old" spaces and places are also affected and therefore seen through different lenses. This forces the characters to redefine their identity in regards to their new home. This in turn perpetuates the cycle where the spaces and places within which the characters interact become even more active in their subjugation. This occurs because the characters do not feel comfortable or confident in these environments because they must reappropriate them through their sense of self formed in their native home, all the while navigating new aspects of their identities in relation to the new environment. Thus, changing these power structures becomes doubly difficult. An attempt at belonging elsewhere automatically changes how one used to relate to their origins, causing disjointedness where the migrant character now belongs to the in-between or the margins of both environments, a type of limbo where s/he struggles to belong more wholly.

The conclusion to the analyses of the relationships between space and place go beyond the characters' connections to a national identity. The different spaces and places affect the way the characters interpret, contextualize, and experience how they are positioned in relation to others' social identities across immigrant and diasporic contexts through various discourses:

Mapping:

In the introduction, I stated that I wanted to map out the geographical locations and important markers that the migrant bodies of the characters used in order to gain a better understanding of their use of space and place, as well as of their possible mobility. Unfortunately, because of the subjective nature of space and place, which are highly dependent upon perception, it was sometimes difficult to analyze the effects upon the differing narratives. This was especially difficult when the authors did not provide much information about the characters' actual origin or where they were situated within the present in relation to the past. The generic "island" was used a lot; however, the Caribbean includes many islands and I did not want to impose the authors' island of origin onto the characters. Street names in Toronto were often used but only a handful were, most notably Jane and Finch, as many Black immigrants transit through this highly racialized area. Unfortunately, this intentional omission on the part of the authors did not provide further analysis based on the non-place that are streets. However, the intentional omission itself is also symbolic of a more general, rather than specific, application and use of the spaces that the characters might represent. Misrahi-Barack explains up the importance of the actual physical locations within the city and how it is reflected on the migrant bodies' navigation of their environment:

> The city offers the paradox of a territory already composed by and for the other but where an identity of one's own can still be worked out. It is this kind of search that comes alive in Caribbean-Canadian short stories, in which the writers never cease to reformulate the constitutive elements of their identity, old and new, migrant and Canadian. By doing so, they recompose Canadian identity at large and invite Caribbean identity to gain ever new perspectives. Be it in the work of Austin Clarke, Neil Bissoondath, Dionne Brand or Althea Prince, the literary use of the city brings about a new mapping of the socio-historical and political space to be achieved. But

> more deeply, the integration of the cityscape within the writing allows a new ontological cartography to be drawn (9).

However, the actual mapping of streets and the locations of employment or leisure of cultural significance was not possible for the purpose of this thesis. Regardless of this missing piece of the puzzle, the spaces and place and opportunities for mobility are still relevant to an understanding of the migrant bodies and the navigation of their environment, as well as their identity creation.

Nostalgia:

Nostalgia, being a main factor in how space and place are internalized, is nevertheless extremely subjective, and the points of view presented within the texts may not be true to reality, as events, memories and emotions can taint the locations and how the characters feel from one instance to another. This is a prime example as to how movement is also an important factor to the analysis of space and place and how perceptions and affect as well are in constant flux. The purely geographical analysis of locating streets and towns within the narratives on maps were not so relevant. The social spheres were much more telling. An example of this would be that a character living within a ghetto has much more impact than a character living on X street, even though the environment is the same. This is where separating notions of space and place becomes difficult, because the social aspect and the emotional aspect interrelate and are codependent in identity while the geographical location remains the same. Analysing space and place became extremely relevant in attempting to extricate instances of displacement, relocation and of belonging and insecurity. The geographical locations became markers that enabled a delineation through which the actual analysis of space and place could be achieved. This was chiefly done by looking through the differing lenses of the community and of the individuals represented within the texts, after having gone through the key step of determining

actual physical geographical locations, especially of “over here” and “over there.” Critically summarizing, comparing and analyzing the significance and meaning of key recurrent spaces and places and how they relate to representations of identity formation in the narratives was important in proving my thesis because it allowed for a pattern of cultural nostalgia to emerge.

The characters' attempts to reinstate nostalgic ideas or discourses onto new, as well as old environments, in order to render them more familiar and navigable, was made much more evident through the methods in which they interacted within the spaces and places they found themselves in. The spaces and places were extremely relevant in determining how the dominant ideologies affected the characters and how they perceived their identity. The dichotomies of “over here” and “over there” created a “them” and “us” that was emphasized through their uses of space and place and the communities and individuals with whom they interacted. As mentioned, Davis states that the “contestation” over space and place is relevant within the discourses of citizenship and (un)belonging. Her argument that “the right to belong has to be earned differently,” demonstrates how the characters are forced to find their own ways within those spaces and places to make themselves belong. Although she stated this for the Black literary tradition, it is also applicable to others, such as Bissoondath, whose characters experience the same type of dislocation, even though their historical backgrounds differ. As Gupta and Ferguson state:

> Remembered places have often served as symbolic anchors of community for dispersed people… “Homeland” in this way remains one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced peoples, though the relation to homeland may be very differently constructed in different settings. Moreover, even in completely deterritorialized times and setting - settings where “home” is not only distant, but also where the very notion of “home” as a durably fixed place is in doubt - aspects of our lives remain highly “localized” in a social sense,

> as Peters (1992) argues. We need to give up naive ideas of communities as literal entities (cf. Cohen 1985), but remain sensitive to the profound "bifocality" that characterizes locally lived lives in a globally interconnected world, and the powerful role of place in the "near view' of lived experience (11).

Unfortunately, nostalgia always invades the territory of belonging for the migrant characters. The promise of the new place, while still longing for the old, is tainted by memories of the old.

Origins:

As I stated in the introduction, I foresaw the way the characters remember or experience places of origin or spaces that remind them of places of origin would likely have positive associations to the extent that they are represented nostalgically, especially in opposition to alienating places in Canada. I did find this to be accurate; however, there was a caveat: the fact that the places of origin had positive associations while being represented nostalgically ensured that the spaces and places within Canada became more alienating. A good example is how the character from "No Red Flower Fences, No Rinsed Blue Sky" by Brand continuously compared her home in Canada to what she remembered of her home on the Island. Because she remembered her home country as being better, where she could swim in the Ocean rather than look at the lake, she could not see the positive aspect of the lake itself.

I had also hypothesized that familiar places of origin that have negative associations were likely to be contrasted with positive experiences of place in Canada. I did not find this to be untrue but neither did I find many examples, as there were very little positive associations of spaces and places within Canada throughout all the stories by the three Caribbean-Canadian authors. Unfortunately, it was easier to identify instances of how these significantly negative discourses on their homeland bounced back to the characters to reinscribe the negative feelings and emotions felt in their new environments. The instances of nostalgia in regards to places of

origin, compared to spaces and places of migration, were extremely helpful in determining the affective associations to space and place. The memories the characters had of their lives before their moving to Canada are not always based on strict reality; they rely on a perception of it. Comparing this idealistic view of their past prevents them from trying to become part of their new surroundings.

Belonging and Unbelonging:

There are several instances within the texts that demonstrate feelings of unbelonging through the characters' interpretations of the spaces and places in which they find themselves. M. Ramgoolan is an excellent example, as is obvious in the "slippages" he feels once he realizes he does not fit in his current present on the Island; nor is he likely to in his own potential future in Toronto. Other characters show maladjustment as well, such as the main character from "Initiation," who feels separate from the other "brothers", in Clarke's short story; the protagonist in Brand's story "Train to Montreal," feels alone because there are no other faces like hers on the train. It became apparent that instances of nostalgia within the texts, in combination with the spaces and places the characters "inhabited," were strong factors in the sense of belonging that the characters felt. This meant that the characters felt negative associations to the spaces and places they encountered due to the nostalgic discourses they entertained. In other words, the cycle of unbelonging continued through the nostalgia experienced by the characters in their associations to space and place. This occurred through various factors, whether through gender or through their social positions (class), through racial differences, the characters being either between themselves or with "others." An example applicable to all of the short story collections is presented by Misrahi-Barack, who describes the works of Austin Clarke as being "short stories in which he depicts the Canadian city as offering the highest rate possible of solitude, discrimination and hate. Emigration clearly

appears to be a burden, even if it was willingly chosen — an exile one can never reconcile oneself with" (1-2). She adds a telling quote by John Clement Ball concerning the division of the characters of Clarke's short stories into categories:

> In the first group are those whom the city has failed, whose experience of Toronto is of exclusion, poverty and loss.... The characters in Clarke's second category allow chinks to become black holes in which racial identity disappears. There are degrees of deracination and assimilation of course, but a typical Clarke protagonist of this group embraces white values and attitudes that erase his black distinctiveness for a wannabe whiteness. And while some measure of material or social success may result, the consequences of inauthenticity are usually devastating. (2).

These devastating consequences are directly associated with the levels of belonging and unbelonging felt by the migrant characters.

Space and Place:

Using the concepts of space and place in order to analyze the narratives of the Caribbean-Canadian authors was much more challenging than anticipated. The concepts of space and place were a bit tricky to separate for the purposes of a coherent analysis because of their interconnectedness. It did become apparent, however, that instances of nostalgia for the characters' countries of origin were extremely important in contextualizing how they internalized their spaces and places. As much as these concepts can be concrete and tangible, they are also highly subjective and can be in constant flux depending on how they are perceived by one character or another and how these characters interact, as well as depending on the various social, emotional and political factors that come into play. Narrative strategies of spatialization that showcased a particular connection between the individual characters and

place were highly representative of the displacement of the migrant subjects. This displacement, in turn, created a specific type of consciousness in the migrants and forced them to inscribe the spaces and places they inhabited differently than those who "belonged." An example can be found in the tools used by Brand to make the reader recognize the depression felt by the main character in the short story "No Rinsed Blue Sky No Red Flower Fences" where she was depressed about the sad state of her place and could not get "out" of her situation and return to her origins, even though she tried by pretending the lake was the ocean. The comparisons she attempted to make only reinforced the lack that her life exhibited. The identification of literary figurations of displacement and spatialization were helpful in identifying moments of identity re-creation, conflict, acceptance or integration. The authors used affect to imbue their characters with feelings related to their situations and surroundings, made palpable by nostalgia, which highlighted their in-betweenness, which in turn relegated them to the margins. That same society was ironically shown as created by them and for them, through the hegemonic social discourses.

It became evident that the postcolonial discourses in the selected literary representations of the spaces and places where the characters found themselves reinforced their situation within the margins and did not allow them to integrate. As demonstrated through my analysis of several of the short stories presented in this thesis, the geographical locations and markers within the narratives were extremely representative of the characters' experiences as migrants. Their growth or stagnation was also highly dependent upon their situatedness and their internalization of their environment. Some of the characters represented positive movement, such as Blossom in the short story "Blossom: Priestess of Oya, Goddess of winds, storms and waterfall," (Brand) who became her own "boss" and found financial independence from the "white man" by opening her own Obeah house. Other characters, though, such as those from "No Red Flower Fences, No Rinsed Blue Sky" (Brand), or from "Trying to Kill Herself,"

(Clarke) whose mental health was so negatively impacted by her environment and her position within it that she was barely living, saw her already minimal mobility reduced to nothing. The places of origin, or spaces that reminded the characters of places of origin, had positive associations to the extent where they were represented nostalgically. Many of the characters used the spaces and places of origin as ideals to return to improve. However, as the character from Bissoondath's short story "Dancing" is also poignantly aware, through her interactions with her siblings, that things change significantly once one must adapt to a new environment, and one often forgets the hardships of the old spaces and places when faced with the hardships of the new ones.

Gender, Mobility and the Body:

The geographical locations and markers within the narratives did play important roles in the way several of the characters experienced and identified themselves as other, or assimilated in comparison to their home. They were important because they demarcated the physical areas of mobility for the characters. The streets and means of mobility where the characters would move, emphasized the characters' "place" within the environment. In almost all of the short stories the means of mobility for the characters were either to walk or to take public transit. Private vehicles were very rarely mentioned unless the character held a higher social status. The choices on behalf of the authors to use these specific means of mobility, rather than personal vehicles, as the characters moved within the city meant that their own social mobility was restricted. This would make mobility outside of a certain perimeter more difficult and therefore create other difficulties, such as the access to employment or leisure due to long commutes. This is demonstrative of specific socio-economic policies and uses of space already put into place by the hegemonic discourses of those in power, who wish to remain so by creating the binaries of the "us" versus "them" and ultimately marginalize racialized others by creating

physical and symbolic barriers against their encroachments. Therefore, the postcolonial and diasporic values and identities were reinforced by the literary representations of space and place. However, as Belsey suggests, citing Althusser, in regards to the construction of the self:

> what is represented in ideology is 'not the system of the real relations which govern the existence of individuals, but the imaginary relation of those individuals to the real relations in which they live' (Althusser 1971, p. ISS). In other words, ideology is both a real and an imaginary relation to the world - real in that it is the way in "which people really live their relationship to the social relations which govern their conditions of existence, but it is also imaginary in that it discourages a full understanding of these conditions of existence and the ways in which people are socially constituted within them. It is not, therefore, to be thought of as a system of ideas in people's heads, nor as the expression at a higher level of real material relationships, but as the necessary condition of action within the social formation. Althusser talks of ideology as a 'material practice' in this sense; it exists in the behaviour of people acting according to their beliefs (pp. 155-9)(164-5).

The mobility of the migrant characters was highly limited by the social discourses within which they inhabited, whether real or imaginary. One example would be how the main character from the short story “Initiation” by Clarke became one of the brothers through his association with the other men in the room, by following their ideology, their way of speaking and even their costume. His “angle of vision,” the same as that of the protagonist from “A Visit to A Failed Artist” by Bissoondath, was affected by the discourses to which he was submitted in the spaces and places he found himself.

Unfortunately, it was triply difficult for the female characters to have agency due to the fact that they are women, black and migrants. Their attempts at belonging and at forming their identity were evident in the work that they continuously did to help support their families and

themselves. However, they could not be dependent upon others in order to move forward as this would have affected their identity formation and skewed their own capabilities. Blossom, from Brand's short story "Blossom: Priestess of Oya, Goddess of Winds, Storms and Waterfalls," is the only character from all of the stories in the three collections who succeeds in attempting to determine her own path. She does this by changing her perception of herself in order to gain more agency and power. As Mullins states:

> Thinking and "living" through history, Brand's characters demonstrate the fundamental importance of the body in confronting the past and in imagining the future. Brand's writing in *Sans Souci,* then, supports Crawford's assertion that if the body cannot be allowed or encouraged to add to the narrative of experience or to add its own form of narrative, to be brought into autobiographical memory, then traumatized subjects and their experiences are at risk of being left outside of meaning, outside of making-sense (718) (20).

While this can be applicable to all of the characters, it is extremely relevant for the female characters. It is through the potential for movement that the characters are able to shed the old discourses that they are given through their place of origin and attempt to gain back their own agency. Mullins also comments Garvey on place and the female body in Brand: "Garvey has read the fraught connection between place and body in Brand's collection as an example of how the female body resembles "occupied territory" and argues that "these women express a repeated need to leave the place they occupy [in order to] find a space of empowerment (486)" (Mullins 9). It is through the contestation and reappropriation of space and place, of gender roles and mobility that the characters, and migrant bodies, are able to find a space of empowerment from which to create, redefine and reinscribe their own spaces and places of belonging. McKittrick and Peake suggest that:

> Racial segregation, for example, is a spatial expression of difference – it separates communities, perpetuates uneven economies, and geographically marks the landscape. But geographies of segregation also invoke varying responses to cycles of domination: migration, music, graffiti, art, community gatherings, literature, protests, violence, and celebrations all reconfigure the meanings of places (44).

Even though the existing colonial discourses create environments in which the migrants characters are forced into inscribing the pre-existing values, it is by reappropriating their environments on their own terms, however much possible, and by working through the pre-existing discourses, that these characters will be able to recreate an identity of their own and feel that they may then belong.

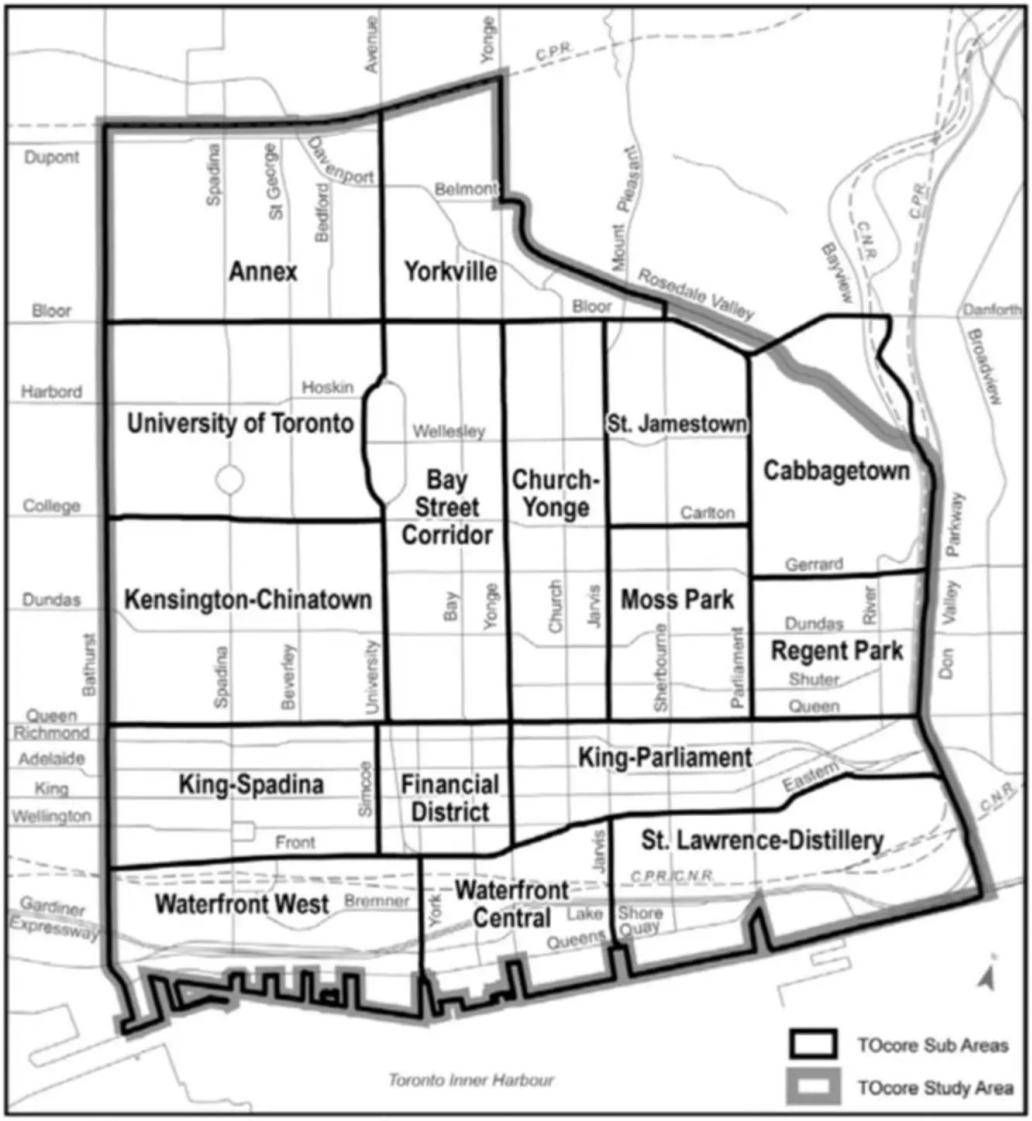
Annex

I have created a graph, below, to give an overview of the timeline related to the authors and their works.

	Born	Immigration to Canada	Works
Bissoondath	1955 in Trinidad	1973	1987: *Digging Up the Mountains*
Brand	1953 in Trinidad	1970	1988: *Sans Souci*
Clarke	1934 in Barbados	1955	1992: *In This City*

The following maps outline the various neighbourhoods of downtown Toronto as this is where several of the migrant characters within the stories find themselves when in Canada. Its purpose was mainly to provide a visual of where some of the characters are located through the streets in the short stories, as well as any neighbourhoods that may be mentioned.

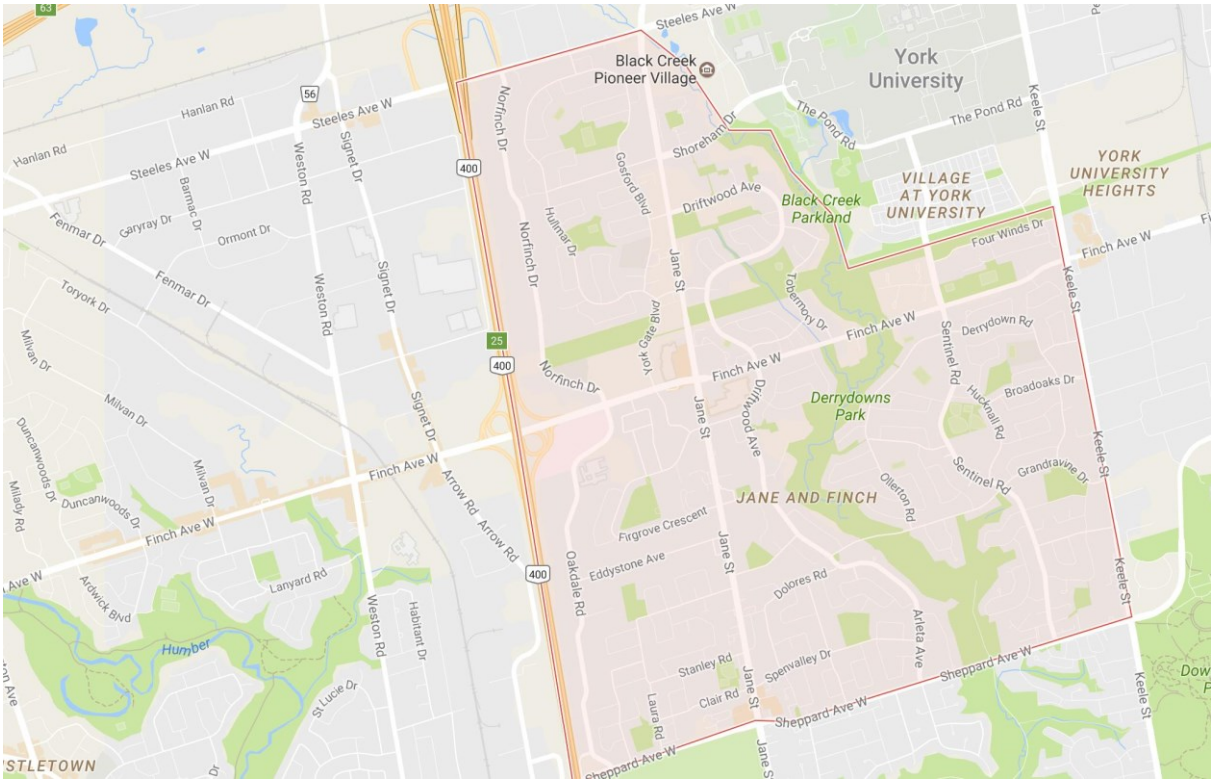
Map 1: Map of Downtown Neighbourhoods



This map of downtown Toronto was included in reports set to go before a city committee on May 1. Image via MattElliott/City of Toronto.[15]

[15] This map was copied directly from the source and still has the link to the City of Toronto, however, I was not able to find it on that site. http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/decisionBodyProfile.do?function=doPrepare&meetingId=13042#Meeting-2018.PG29

The following map is a current map taken from Google of the Jane and Finch area.



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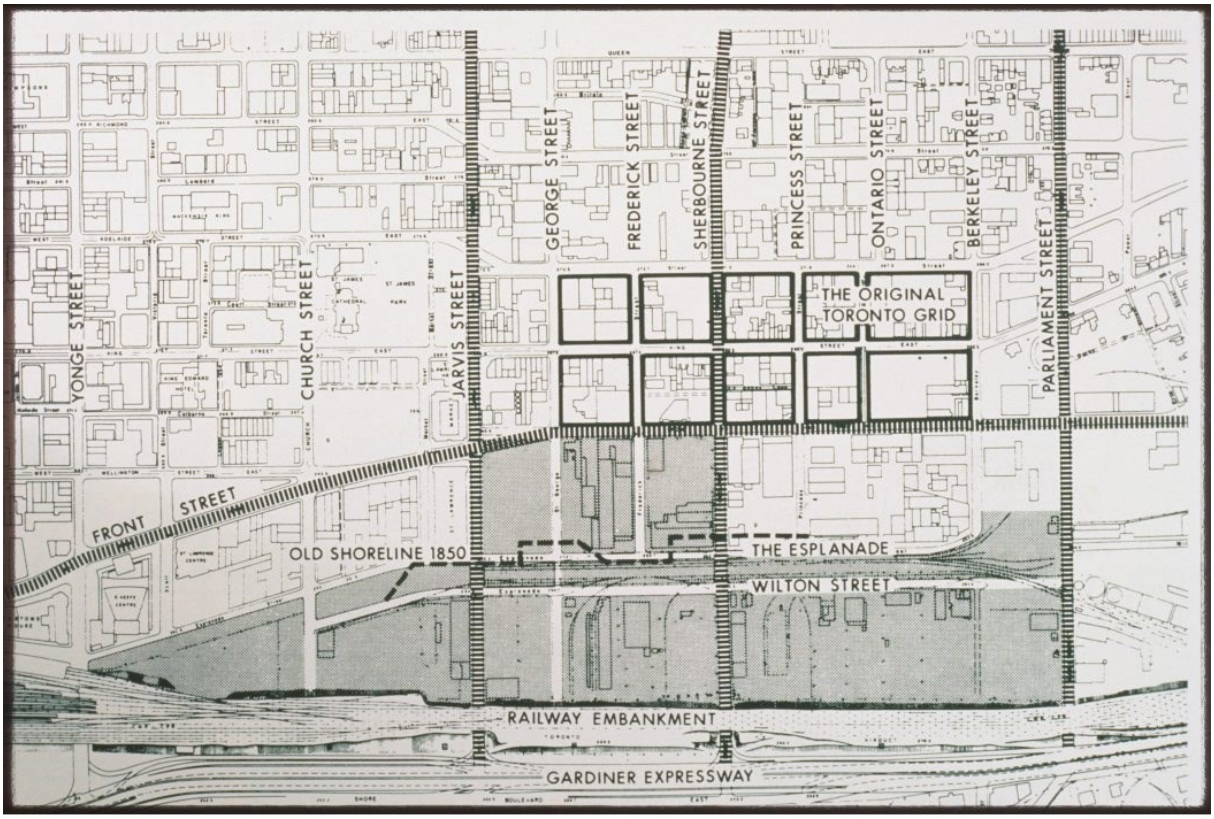
[16] https://map-of-toronto.com/img/0/jane-and-finch-neighbourhood-toronto-map.jpg

The following map dates from 1980-98, which is around the time the works of all three authors were written:



City of Toronto Archives, Series 1465, File 119, Item 23

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[17]https://torontoguardian.com/2016/05/vintage-toronto-maps/

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